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ABSTRACT

Belgium's vocational education and training (VET) was examined. The following topics were considered: (1) the VET environment (political and administrative structures; the economy; the labor force; unemployment); (2) Belgium's educational system (funding principles; the structure and objectives of basic, secondary, and higher education); (3) the history of VET in Belgium, initial vocational training (IVT), and continuing vocational training (CVT); (4) the legal and legislative framework and financing; (5) qualitative aspects (certification and qualification; training of trainers; and vocational guidance); and (6) trends and perspectives. The analysis established that Belgium's public authorities have generally played a leading role in VET, especially in IVT. Like other European countries, Belgium is facing the problem of adapting education to current realities. Attempts are therefore being made to provide students with education that is general enough to keep abreast of current technologies but specific enough for them to be integrated into enterprises. It was concluded that all VET stakeholders, including enterprises, must place all kinds of IVT and CVT on a practical footing and devote more attention to formulation and application of uniform quality criteria. (Sixty-eight tables/figures are included. The

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following items are appended: list of acronyms and abbreviations; addresses of 14 main organizations; a 77-item bibliography; and a glossary.) (MN)

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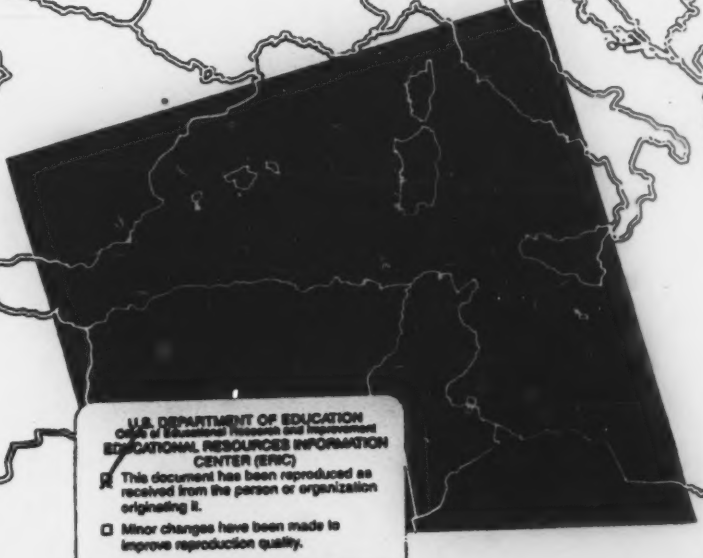

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Vocational education and training in Belgium

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Cedefop introduction

Objectives and users

The publication of this description of vocational education and training in Belgium is a step towards updating and extending the series of monographs on the Member States – 12 at that time – that Cedefop published between 1993 and 1996. The series now includes the 15 Member States as well as the additional countries covered by the agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA). Its purpose is to help 'foreigners' interested in this subject to understand vocational education and training (VET) in Belgium by providing them with an overall view of the system. It is aimed at any person responsible for, and concerned with, VET policy issues, researchers in this field and directors of vocational training services or establishments, as well as trainers and teachers, whether working at EU or national level, for government agencies or for organisations run by the social partners. While this text will act as a useful reference document for some readers, other readers may prefer to read it in its entirety before they visit Belgium for a study visit or to set up or implement a bilateral or multilateral project.

Content and presentation

The publications of this series offer a description of initial and continuing VET. In the case of initial education and training, they include provisions emanating from both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour or Social Affairs. In the case of continuing training, they describe the schemes available for people in employment or for unemployed people offered by a wide range of government organisations and ministries, private sector organisations and the social partners.

Cedefop drew up a detailed structure for the reports (see the table of contents) and endeavoured to limit their length so that readers could more readily compare the training systems of the various EU Member States. This structure largely follows that adopted for the reports on the Member States commissioned in 1992, with a few changes such as the addition of a chapter on what we have called 'qualitative aspects', which provides information on certification, the training of trainers and guidance. We asked the authors of all the monographs, including those updating existing monographs, to follow this modified structure in order to help those readers wishing to compare systems.

Choice of authors and consultation procedures

With this series, Cedefop has endeavoured to create a product which is in some ways impossible to produce. We wanted a report written by a person with inside knowledge of the system in question that could also be readily understood by an outside reader. It followed that the person/institution selected as the author was resident in the country described and wrote, unless he or she chose otherwise, in his or her mother tongue. Cedefop played the role of the outside reader during discussions of the draft text in order to draw authors' attention to points that might not be readily understood by the target audience.

Cedefop also stipulated that authors should consult the main parties concerned by VET in their countries when drawing up the initial version of their report. The draft text was therefore sent not only to the various public bodies responsible for organising the system and providing VET, but also to the main bodies representing the social partners. Members of Cedefop's management board in the countries in question were able to provide valuable help in this respect.

Publication and updating

Cedefop intends, resources permitting, to publish printed versions of these monographs in their original language and in German, English and French. In exceptional circumstances, some monographs may also be published in other languages. Experience shows, however, that the time required for translation and preparation of a printed publication and the pace of change in the systems described means that reports can never be entirely up to date. It is for this reason that Cedefop is also using electronic publishing methods so that reports can be summarised and kept up to date on its interactive Internet site (http://www.trainingvillage.gr).

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Comments and feedback

As mentioned above, Cedefop is aware that choices had to be made when preparing this series. We should be grateful to hear whether readers feel that the choices that we made as regards the scope, content and structure of the reports were correct. We should be happy to receive comments by letter, fax or electronic mail.

Vocational education and training in Belgium

In a number of Member States, it seems more appropriate to speak of 'systems' in the plural rather than a single system of VET. This is particularly true of Belgium, where the education and training supply is shaped not only by the division of the country into regions and linguistic communities, but also by the large-scale participation of private authorities (particularly the Catholic Church) and the respective roles of a number of ministries, in particular (but not exclusively) the Ministries of Education and Employment, at national as well as regional/community level. A vast array of options is therefore available for people looking for both initial and continuing education and training. This supply seems to be well used, as Belgium has a high level of school attendance and educational attainment. What is less clear is how transparent the overall range of activities appears to those (particularly those threatened for various reasons with exclusion) seeking further education and training, and how well co-ordinated and integrated the various options are. The system may, to an extent, be provider rather than user driven.

It has not been an easy task to draw up this publication, chiefly because of the wide range of responsibilities and of service providers, as mentioned above. Many colleagues and partners in Belgium pointed out that, at present, it is not possible to describe VET in Belgium within a single publication drafted by a single author. This would; however, have had major implications for Cedefop as we would then have had to decide how many descriptions would be needed for Belgium and for other decentralised EU Member States.

Cedefop would like to thank the authors of this report and Mr Vandresse, coordinator of InduTec (*Association des Instituts Supérieurs Industriels de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale* — Association of Higher Industrial Institutes of the Brussels region), for their work. We are also grateful to a number of other partners (for example the Belgian members of our management board, various colleagues at the Ministries of Education of the Flemish and German-speaking communities, the Central Economic Council, *VDAB*, *FOREM*, the Ministry of the Walloon region and Paul Cotton of the Centre Médico-Psycho-Social in Ath) who helped us by providing additional comments and up-to-date information. We would also like to thank Véronique Ballestra who, during her period of work experience at Cedefop, was able to incorporate this information into the final text. We are aware that some of our Belgian partners will be disappointed by this or that detail in the final publication, but we hope that we have managed to create a product that provides a useful overall view, in particular for an audience not familiar with the Belgian system(s).

Stavros Stavrou
Deputy Director

J. Michael Adams Eleonora Schmid
Project coordinators

Thessaloniki, April 2001

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Author's preface

This monograph on vocational education and training in Belgium, produced under the supervision of Cedefop, follows the basic plan common to all Member States.

Bibliographical source research work was commissioned from students in the second and third years of the 'Graduate librarian-documentalist' section during the 1998/99 academic year, as part of courses entitled 'Documentary research techniques in the humanities' and 'Sources of information for the humanities'. The lecturers supervising these students also played a very active and efficient part in this documentary research. As the sources of documentation began to take shape we very quickly realised that we were facing very major problems.

Although Belgium is a small country, it has become highly complex as a result of the creation of vocational education and training systems which, albeit operational, are not particularly well coordinated.

Features inherited from the 19th century are still to be found in the area of vocational education and training. As Belgium has become a federal State, devolution to the regions has further complicated matters. Although we share a common basic organisation, vocational education and training have developed in very different ways over the last 10 years.

It has not therefore been possible for us to draw up an exhaustive inventory of all the operators working in the field of education and training. A wide range of options organised by associations, which have always played a major part in Belgium, have been developed in recent years alongside 'conventional' options. These options have been introduced to try to find ways of resolving two key problems in Belgium: high unemployment and a rate of school failure which is among the highest in Europe. We have therefore restricted ourselves to traditional continuing training providers to prevent readers from becoming confused by our specific regional features.

By way of conclusion, we should like to thank all the people and institutions who provided so much of their time to supply us with information in this particularly complex field.

Roselyne Simon
June 2000

Vocational education and training in Belgium

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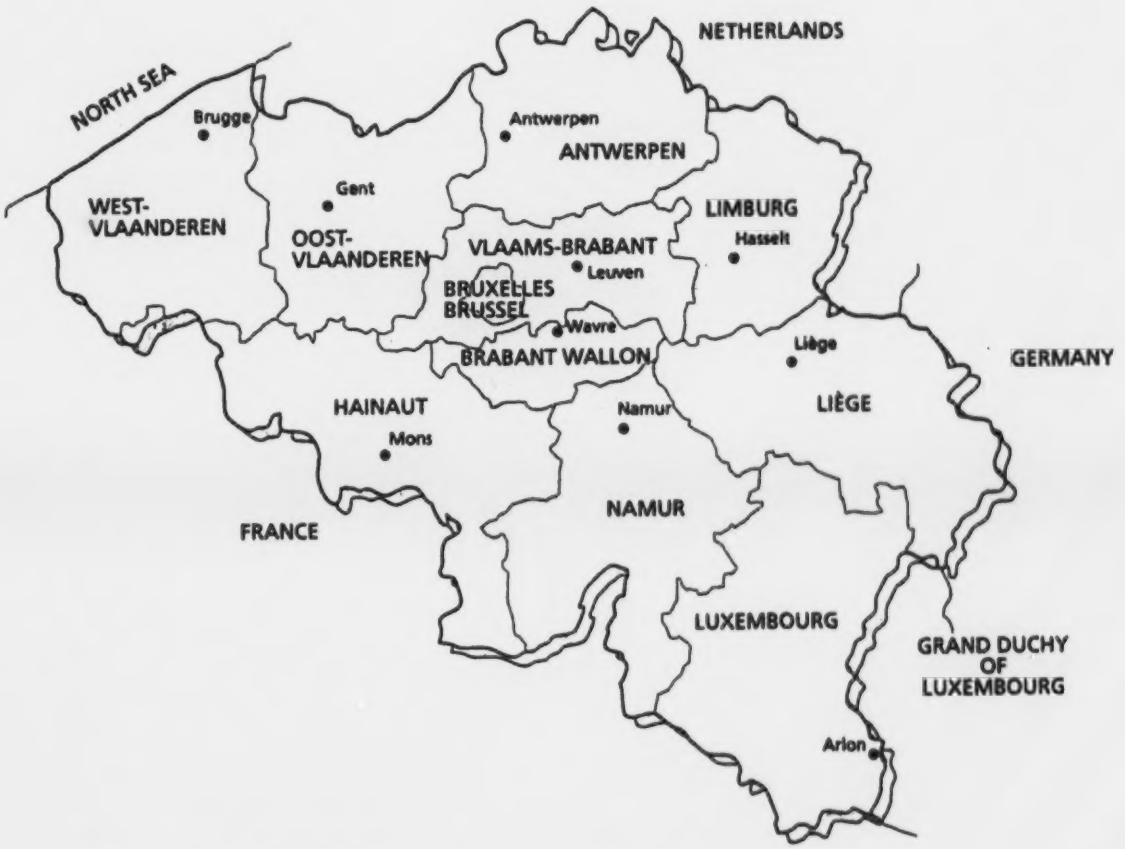
Federal Belgium — The 10 provinces



Chapter 1
Background information

1.1. Political and administrative structures

1.1.1.

With an area of 30 507 km², Belgium is one of the smallest of the 15 Member States of the European Union. It has borders with four countries: the Netherlands to the north, Germany and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the east and France to the south. To the west it is bordered by the North Sea.

1.1.2.

Belgium, which became a unitary State in 1831, is a parliamentary democracy in the form of a constitutional monarchy and, following successive amendments to the Constitution (1970, 1980, 1988, 1994), has become a federal State. At the time of these amendments, the State transferred many powers to the regions and the communities. For instance, the communities became responsible for education, while the regions are responsible for some aspects of vocational training such as social advancement (1), redeployment and vocational retraining.

The last amendment of the Constitution in 1994 made Belgium into a completely federal State. Although other European countries have provided their component entities with the autonomy needed to express their identity, Belgium stands out as a result of its twofold linguistic and regional approach.

1.1.3.

The different demands of the French and Flemish language communities have brought about a twofold change in the country. Two types of autonomous authority, between which there are interactions, have been created: the communities reflect Belgium's linguistic division while the regions are based on a territorial division.

The three communities are the Flemish community, the French-speaking community and the German-speaking community. The regions are as follows: Flanders, Wallonia and the capital city, Brussels.

The communities are responsible for issues more specifically connected with the person, such as education and culture, while the regions are responsible for issues connected with training, employment, the economy or the local area, such as aid for enterprises and town planning (see also Section 3.3.4).

1.1.4.

As the accompanying maps show:

— the Flemish community is responsible for Flanders and for Dutch-speaking institutions in Brussels;

— the French community is responsible for the French-speaking part of Wallonia and for French-speaking institutions in Brussels;

— the German-speaking community is responsible for the German-speaking area;

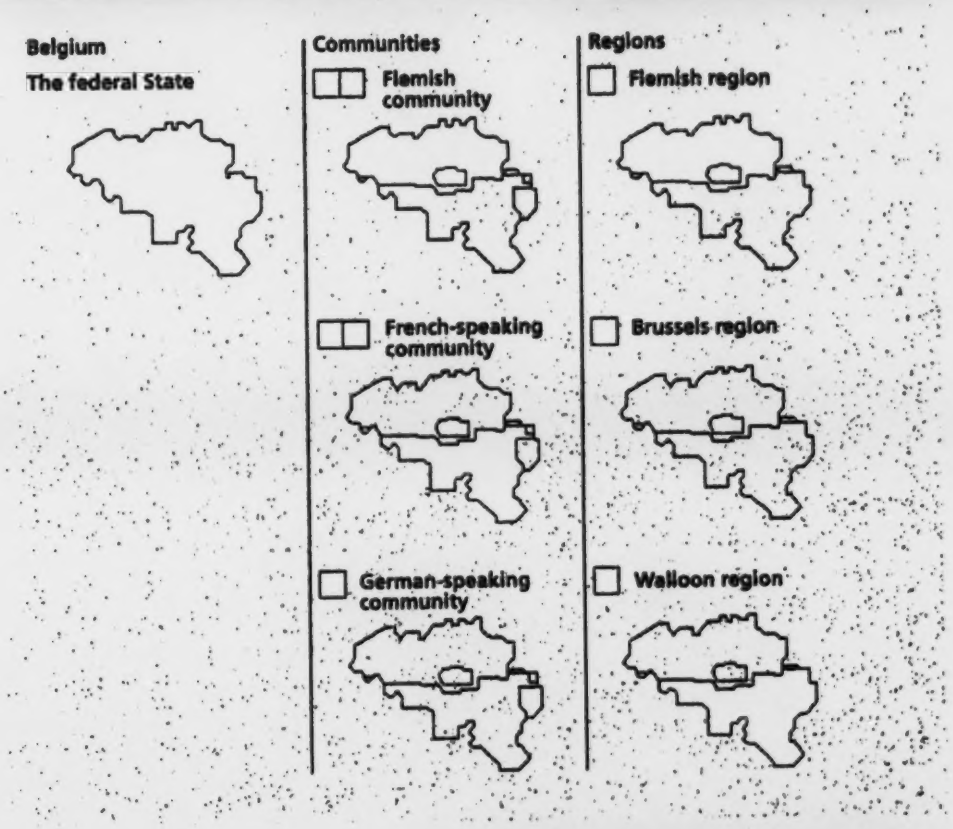
— the Flemish region is responsible for Flanders;

(1) See Annex 4.

— the Walloon region is responsible for Wallonia;

— the Brussels region is responsible for the 19 local authorities that make it up.

Figure 1 — **Administrative map of Belgium**



SOURCES: HTTP://BELGIUM.FGOV.BE/IASTEMPR_FEDERAL_3.HTM (FRENCH); HTTP://BELGIUM.FGOV.BE/IASTEMNL_FEDERAL_3.HTM (FLEMISH).

1.1.5.

The region of Flanders and the Flemish community merged in 1980, with the result that difficulties in pinpointing the distribution of powers between the region and the community, in particular in the area of vocational training, are not to be found in Flanders, but continue to be found in Brussels. The Flemish community has one parliament and government of its own.

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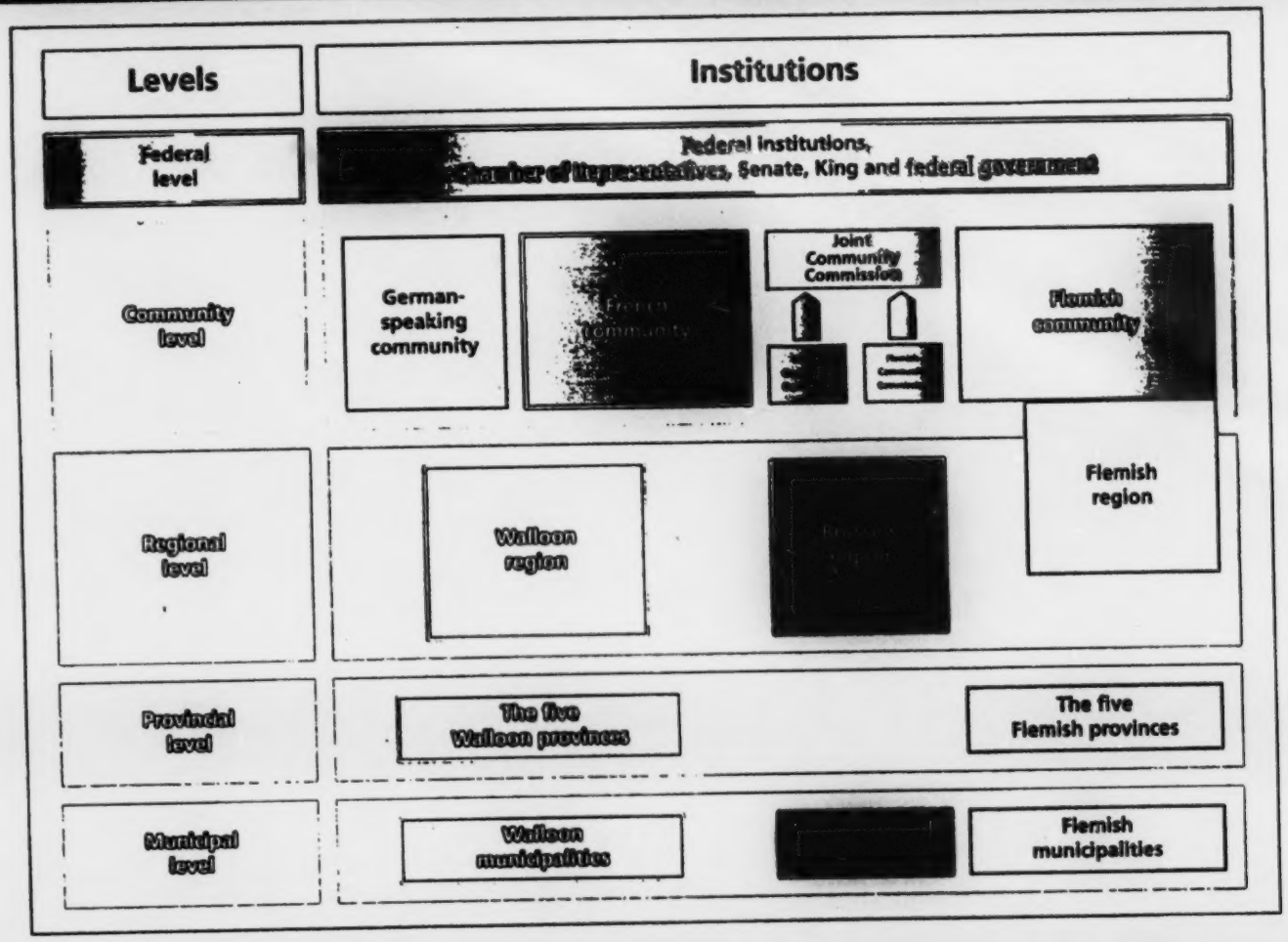
Figure 2 — **Political and administrative structures**



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE WALLOON REGION, "DANS QUEL ÉTAT VIVONS-NOUS", REVUE DIALOGUE – SPECIAL ISSUE, 1999.

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1.1.6.

In contrast, in 1993 the French community transferred a relatively substantial proportion of its powers, in particular in the area of vocational training, to the Walloon region and to the French Community Commission (*Commission communautaire française — COCOF*) in the Brussels region. While this helped to simplify the distribution of powers between the region and the community in Wallonia (leaving aside the German-speaking area), the same cannot be said of Brussels.

The French and the German-speaking communities and the Walloon and Brussels regions each have their own legislative assembly and their own government.

The French Community Commission is responsible for the issues transferred to it by the French community (for instance, vocational training for the middle classes) (*) in respect of French-speaking institutions in Brussels. It also has its own assembly and government, made up respectively of the French-speaking members of the Brussels parliament and government.

1.1.7.

Figure 2 summarising Belgium's various political and administrative structures shows that the new State structures are modelled on those introduced by the 1830 Constitution. On 31 January 1994, the province of Brabant was replaced by two provinces: Walloon and Flemish Brabant. Provincial governments continue to be responsible for enforcing laws, decrees, orders and regulatory orders at provincial level. Municipalities are responsible for those issues which have been assigned to them by the law on municipalities.

1.2. Population

1.2.1. Population breakdown by region

On 1 January 2000, Belgium had 10 239 085 inhabitants in 589 municipalities. Table 1 gives a breakdown of the population by region and by community.

1.2.2. Population trends, breakdown by gender

Figure 3 shows trends in the Belgian population, in total and by gender, from 1 January 1989 to 1 January 1998 with a projection up to 1 January 2051.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the total population was increasing in comparison with the 1960s and 1970s. In 1980 it was 9 855 100. At the end of the 1980s, it was still increasing. In 1989, the population was 9 927 612. In 1995, it was 10 130 574 and increased to 10 192 264 on 1 January 1998. It is predicted that the population will continue to increase and will reach a peak in 2020 with 10 338 000 inhabitants. The Belgian population should then fall to 9 983 000 in 2051. Population figures are therefore very stable, since the extremes between 1995 and 2051 are within a range of +/- 2 %.

(*) See Annex 4.

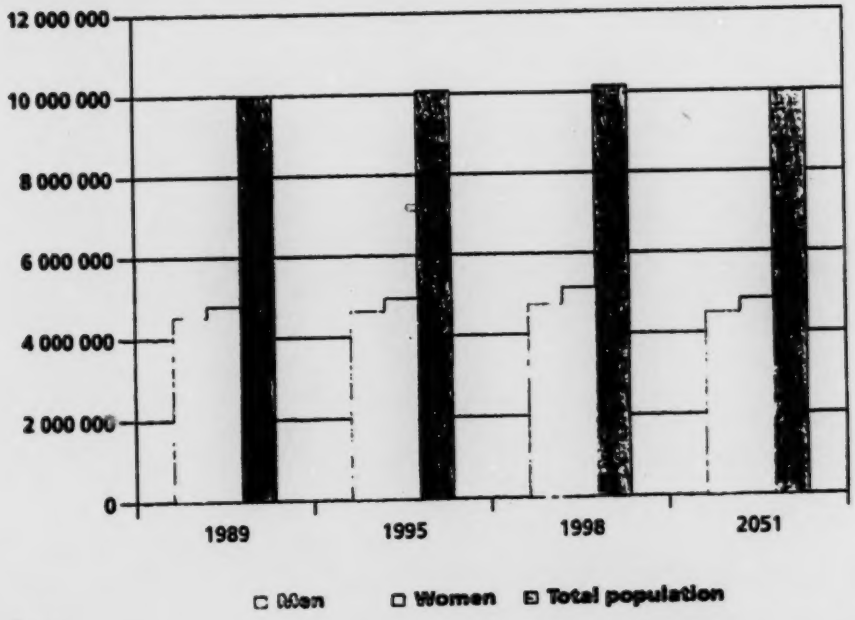
Table 1: Population breakdown by region and community, as at 1 January 2000

	Flemish region	Walloon region	of whom German-speaking community	Brussels region	Total Belgium
Belgians	5 646 601	3 009 669	n.a.	685 705	9 341 975
Foreigners	293 650	329 847	n.a.	273 613	897 110
Total	5 940 251	3 339 516	70 831	959 318	10 239 085
As %	58	32.6	0.7	9.4	100

n.a. = not available.

SOURCE: INSTITUT NATIONAL DE STATISTIQUES (INS), STATISTIQUES DÉMOGRAPHIQUES (MARCH 2000).

Figure 3 — **Population in 1989, 1995 and 1998 and projection for 2051**



SOURCE: INS, BUREAU FÉDÉRAL DU PLAN, PERSPECTIVES DE POPULATION (1998).

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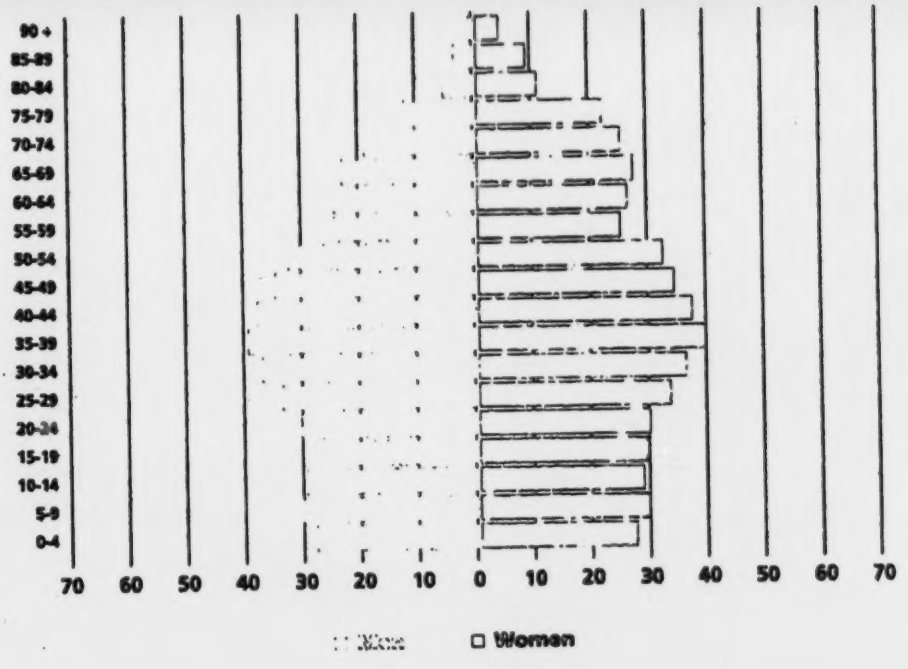
1.2.3. Birth rate and population ageing

The average birth rate remains low in Belgium: 12.2 per 1 000 inhabitants per annum. The most recent figures from the National Statistical Institute show that the typical family in Belgium has 1.6 children. This figure is too low to ensure the renewal of the generations. Each family would need to have 2.05 children for the population to remain stable.

While the birth rate initially started to fall in the south of the country, there has been a reversal of this trend over the last 10 years: the birth rate is now lower than the national average in the north of the country.

As in other western European countries, the Belgian population is ageing. Predictions to 2050 show that the youngest age-groups will continue to decline and the oldest age-groups will continue to increase. People aged 80 and over will increase from 4 % of the total population in 1995 to close on 10 % in 2050. The figure for the over-60s will increase from 21 to 32 %. Only immigration is limiting the ageing of the population as approximately 80 % of immigrants are aged under 40.

Figure 4 — Age structure of the Belgian population as at 1 January 2000 (in thousands)



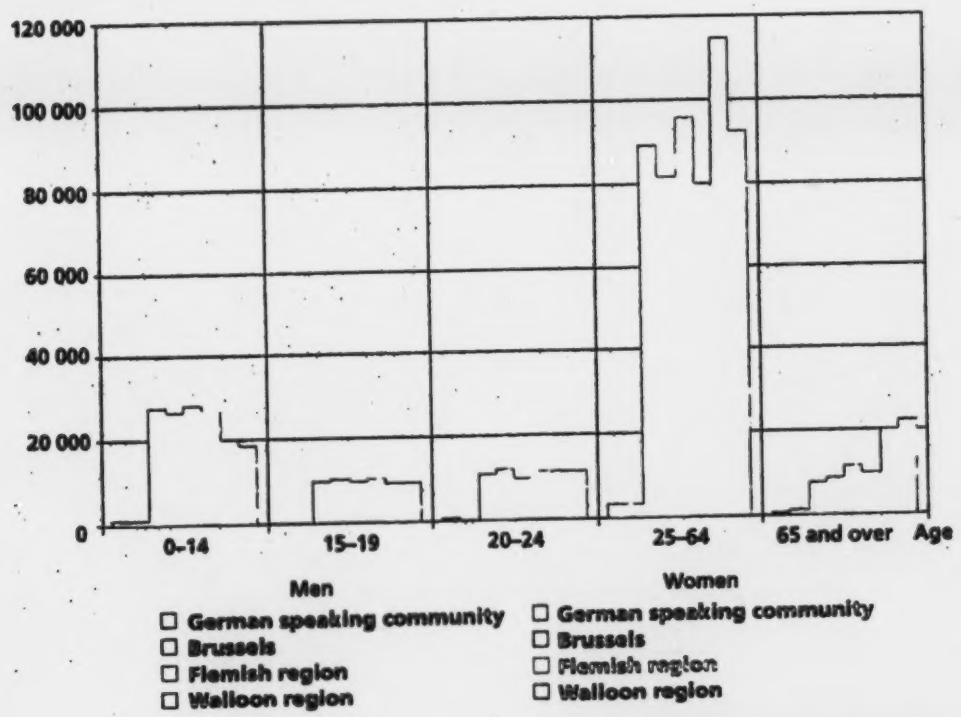
SOURCE: INS, STATISTIQUES DÉMOGRAPHIQUES (2000).

1.2.4. Foreign population

Following the major waves of immigration of the 1960s and 1970s and the slight decrease in absolute figures for the number of foreigners at the end of the 1980s (868 757 in 1989), there was a further slight increase to around 890 000 foreigners and a peak of 911 921 foreigners in 1996.

Foreigners resident in Belgium accounted at that date for 8.97 % of the total population. The largest group of resident foreigners (some 61.5 %) is made up of nationals of the European Union. Most of this group has settled in Wallonia. The second largest group is from Morocco and has settled in particular in Flanders and chiefly in the Brussels region.

Figure 5 — Foreigners by age, gender and region, 1997



SOURCE: INS, STATISTIQUES DÉMOGRAPHIQUES (1998).

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Table 2: Population by (main) nationality as at 1 January 1997

	Belgium	Brussels region	Flemish region	Walloon region	of whom German-speaking community
EEC nationals, including:	559 612	137 624	157 593	264 395	10 871
Italy	*208 215*	*29 762*	*24 558*	*153 895*	*146*
France	*101 749*	*31 719*	*16 121*	*53 909*	*124*
Other European countries	26 610	8 509	10 945	7 556	204
Turkey	78 532	20 833	39 313	18 386	9
Morocco	138 252	73 070	45 817	19 365	44
Other African countries	38 877	15 903	8 862	14 112	31
Americas,	21 456	6 657	7 991	6 808	37
including USA	*12 287*	*3 153*	*4 519*	*4 615*	*17*
Asia	25 924	11 039	11 865	3 020	67
Oceania	658	216	306	136	2
Total inhabitants, including Belgians	**10 170 226**	**950 597**	**5 898 824**	**3 320 805**	**69 703**

SOURCE: INS.

1.2.5. Population distribution

Belgium can be considered as a highly urbanised country. Leaving aside the south of Wallonia, it is almost possible to cross Belgium from north to south or from east to west without leaving a largely urban environment. The 18 urban regions of the country account alone for 57 % of the population, 65 % of employment and 73 % of professional and managerial personnel.

Brussels is clearly larger than the sum of its 19 local authorities: the Brussels conurbation now has over 2.5 million inhabitants.

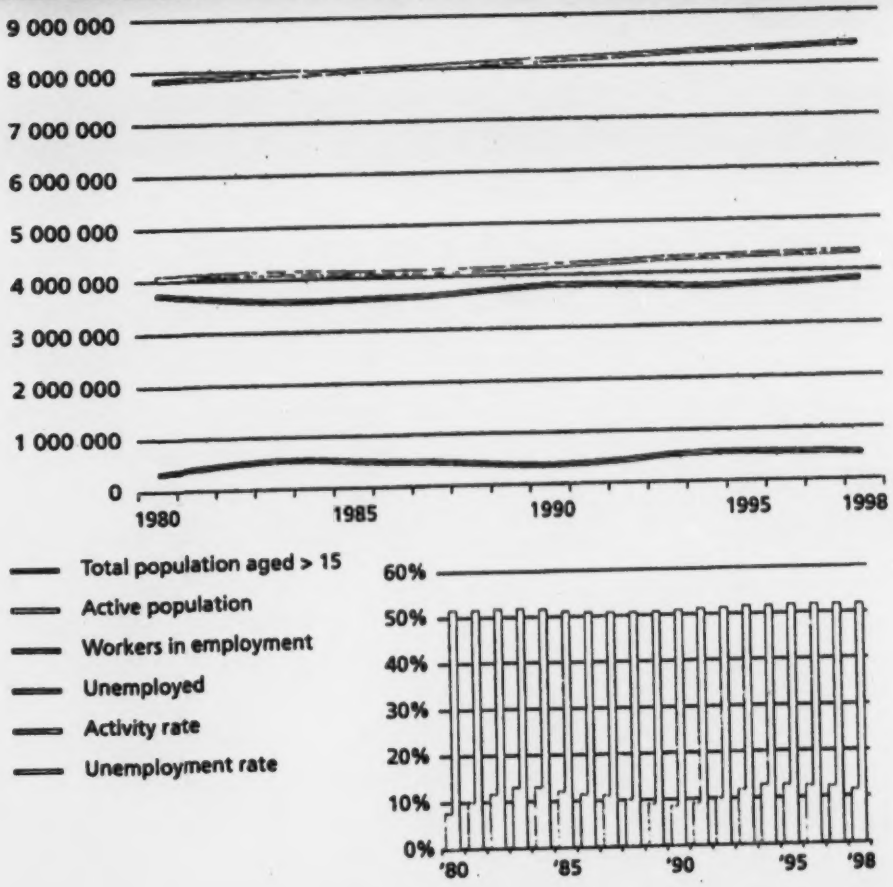
1.3. Active population

1.3.1. Trends in the active population

According to the most recent findings published in the *1999 Labour force survey* by the National Statistical Institute, Belgium had an active population of 4 382 000 in 1999.

Figure 6 is based on figures from the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour and shows that despite the continuing increase in the number of workers, the activity rate is stagnating and may even fall when the baby boom generations reach retirement age.

Figure 6 — Trends in the active population and in the rates of activity and unemployment, 1980 to 1998



SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR, LA POPULATION ACTIVE TOTALE 1998.

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1.3.2. Structure of the active population

Table 3: Active population as at 30 June 1998

	Men	Women	Total
1. Active population in employment	2 216 089	1 637 223	3 853 312
A. Domestic employment	2 186 726	1 612 530	3 799 256
Employees	1 759 485	1 347 234	3 106 719
Private sector employees	1 268 360	851 899	2 120 259
Public sector employees	491 125	495 335	986 460
Employees in return to work programmes	45 843	90 096	135 939
Self-employed and assistants	427 241	265 296	692 537
B. Frontier and transregional employment	29 363	24 693	54 056
Incoming frontier and transregional workers	16 122	5 351	21 473
Outgoing frontier and transregional workers	45 485	30 044	75 529
2. Active population unemployed	219,058	286 224	505 282
Full-time unemployed entitled to benefits	180 990	244 082	425 072
Compulsorily registered unemployed not in work	28 956	31 036	59 992
Jobseekers not in work	9 112	11 106	20 218
3. Total active population (1 + 2)	2 435 147	1 923 447	4 358 594

SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR, 'LA POPULATION ACTIVE EN BELGIQUE: 1. LE PAYS: SITUATION AU 30 JUIN 1998', LABOUR MARKET OUTLOOK, BRUSSELS, 1998.

Table 4: Active population by gender, 1980, 1990 and 1998

		1980	1990	1998
Workers in employment	Men	2 438 650	2 297 812	2 216 089
	Women	1 308 519	1 516 728	1 637 223
Workers unemployed	Men	117 703	142 535	219 058
	Women	204 607	222 161	286 224
Total active population	Men	2 556 353	2 440 347	2 435 147
	Women	1 513 126	1 738 889	1 923 447
Total population	**Men**	**4 811 731**	**4 870 372**	**4 988 198**
	Women	**5 036 517**	**5 096 987**	**5 214 814**

SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT, STRUCTURE D'ACTIVITÉ DE LA POPULATION (2000).

Table 4 shows that women now account for a substantial proportion of the total active population, whereas there have been major job losses among men.

1.3.3. Part-time work

Table 5 shows trends in part-time work from 1989 to 1999.

Table 5: Part-time work, 1989 to 1999 (as %)

Year	Men	Women	Total
1989	1.6	24.9	10.2
1991	2.0	25.8	11.7
1993	2.2	28.5	12.7
1995	2.8	29.8	13.6
1997	3.3	31.4	14.7
1998	3.5	33.3	15.8
1999	5.0	39.1	19.5

SOURCE: INSINSEL 1999 LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (2000).

The very substantial gap at the outset (1989) between men and women is continuing to grow. Part-time work among men is growing slowly.

1.4. The economy and the labour force (*)

1.4.1. The macroeconomic framework

In recent years Belgium has introduced a strict policy to streamline its public finances, thus meeting the budget criteria imposed by the Treaty of Maastricht and intended to absorb the effects of population ageing. The public debt ratio (*) fell from 135.2 % in 1993 to 122.2 % in 1997. The reduction of this ratio was one of the fastest in Europe during this period. In the European Union, the public debt ratio increased by 6 % during this same period.

1.4.2. Economic growth

The Belgian economy is very open. The degree of openness measured by mean exports and imports of goods and services was 66 % of GDP in 1966 in comparison with only 23 % for France, 26 % for Germany and 51 % for the Netherlands. This situation makes Belgium's economic growth highly dependent on other countries, particularly those of the European Union with which 75 % of trade takes place.

The figures in Table 6 show an ongoing economic progression between 1980 and 1999/2000.

(*) Source: Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour. Cabinet — *Investir dans la personne et l'emploi: Plan d'action belge pour l'emploi établi dans le cadre des lignes directrices européennes pour l'emploi:* 1998.

(*) Public debt ratio: ratio evaluating the debt 'burden' as a function of the value chosen (in this case: GDP).

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Table 6: Balance of exports and imports (in 1 000 million BEF)

1980	1990	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
- 112	+ 146	+ 352	+ 334	+ 394	+ 366	+ 376

EUR 1 = BEF 40.34.

SOURCE: INS, COMPTES MACRO-ÉCONOMIQUES (2000).

Table 7: Growth of the economy (in %)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998 (*)	1999 (**)	2000 (**)
Trend in GDP at constant prices	+ 2	+ 2.3	+ 1.3	+ 3	+ 2.9	+ 1.9	+ 2.2

(*) Estimate by the Belgian National Bank (February 1999).
(**) International Monetary Fund (IMF) (April 1999) and OECD (May 1999).

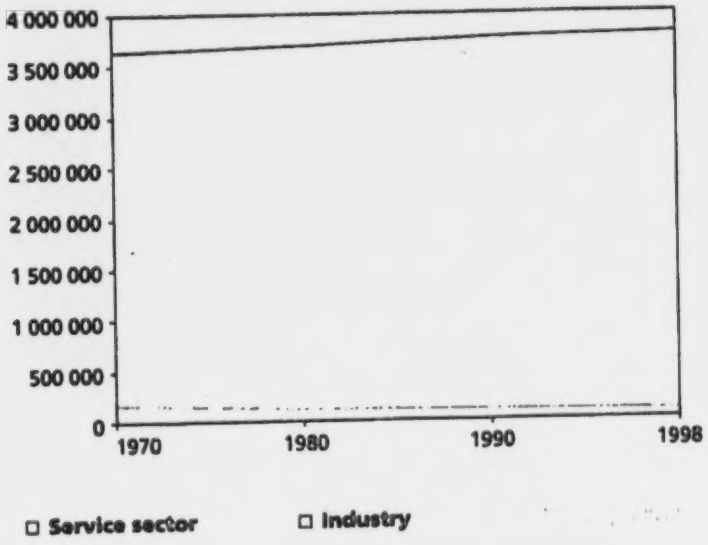
SOURCES: UNTIL 1993, INS; INSTITUT DES COMPTES NATIONAUX (1994-97); NATIONAL BANK OF BELGIUM (1998).

1.4.3. Consumer prices and inflation

There has been a very moderate increase in consumer prices in Belgium since 1993. It has been below the European average (2.3 % annually in comparison with an average of 3 %). According to figures from the Federal Ministry of the Economy and Finance, the inflation rate was 2.55 % in 2000 and forecasts for 2001 vary between 1.4 and 1.9 %. This is the result of major structural reforms introduced by the federal and the regional governments. It was followed by an upturn in private consumption during the second half of 1997.

1.4.4. Economic structure

Figure 7: Trends in employment by sector, 1970 to 1998



SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR, EMPLOI INTÉRIEUR TOTAL PAR SECTEUR 1970–98 (BRUSSELS, 2000).

If the situation in 1998 is compared with the situation in 1970, it can be seen that in slightly less than 30 years the gap between the service sector and the other sectors has widened. Over 70 % of Belgian employees were employed in the service sector in 1999, whereas there has been a drastic fall in numbers in industry which was the main employer in the past. In keeping with normal trends in agriculture in post-industrial countries, this sector is in bottom position. Analysis of the regional breakdown shows that industry is doing best in Flanders; in the Brussels region, the service sector has an almost complete monopoly; and agriculture, which is distributed equally between Wallonia and Flanders, is completely lacking.

The figures in Table 8 on recent trends in employment by sector enable, however, a more detailed analysis of Belgium's current economic structure.

Table 8: Trends in the breakdown of employees by sector, 1996 to 1999

	Figures as at 30 June 1998	Figures as at 30 June 1999	Annual variations as % 1996/97	1997/98
A. Agriculture, hunting and forestry	30 212	30 626	0.8	3.1
B. Fisheries	804	762	-9.5	-0.9
Primary sector	**31 016**	**31 388**	**0.5**	**3.0**
C. Mining and quarrying	4 239	4 176	-13.4	-0.7
D. Manufacturing	630 758	624 654	-2.1	1.0
E. Electricity, gas and water	28 034	27 109	-2.0	2.7
F. Construction	184 065	187 633	-0.8	-0.2
Industry	**847 096**	**843 572**	**-1.9**	**0.8**
G. Commerce, repairs	414 842	424 791	0.8	1.8
H. Hotels and restaurants	107 807	107 534	0.3	2.2
I. Transport, storage and communications	235 604	241 740	0.8	0.6
J. Financial services	129 165	127 789	-1.0	0.2
K. Real estate, renting and business activities	329 249	340 814	10.2	6.3
Service sector	**1 241 669**	**2 482 267**	**2.8**	**2.6**
L. Public administration	352 088	359 739	10.7	-0.2
M. Education	358 084	360 926	-2.4	0.9
N. Health and social work	360 372	369 615	3.4	5.7
O. Community, social and personal service activities	117 463	123 641	0.3	1.0
P- Q- Z. Other	25 002	25 478	-5.5	-2.9
Total employment	**3 307 788**	**3 357 227**	**1.6**	**1.9**

SOURCE: ONSS, EMPLOYEURS ET TRAVAILLEURS ASSUJETTIS À LA SÉCURITÉ SOCIALE AU 30 JUIN 1999.

On 30 June 1998, there had been a slight increase of 0.8 % in the industrial sector, in comparison with –1.9 % in 1997, chiefly in the metalworking sectors. There had been an ongoing increase in growth in the service sector: +2.6 % in comparison with +2.8 % in 1997, in particular in the sectors of commerce and repairs and hotels and restaurants.

Table 9 gives a sectoral breakdown by region as percentages of the regional active population in 1997.

Table 9: Employment by region and sector, 1997 (in %)

	Brussels			Flemish region			Walloon region			Belgium		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Agriculture	0.2	0.3	0.1	2.9	3.2	2.5	2.9	3.5	1.9	2.7	3.0	2.1
Industry	16.0	21.7	8.6	30.6	40.6	15.8	24.5	34.9	9.2	27.5	37.4	13.2
Services	83.8	78.0	91.3	66.5	56.2	81.7	72.6	61.6	88.9	69.8	59.6	84.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: INS, ENQUÊTE SUR LES FORCES DE TRAVAIL – RÉSULTATS 1997.

1.4.5. Income per inhabitant: differences between the regions

In 1994, the average income per inhabitant was BEF 356 000. The median income shows a higher level of income: 50 % of Flemings earn more than BEF 729 000 and 50 % of the inhabitants of Brussels earn over BEF 665 000. The highest incomes were on the outskirts of urban regions and in the south of Luxembourg which benefits from jobs provided by the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The lowest incomes are in rural municipalities and along the former Walloon industrial corridor (Sambre and Meuse).

Analysis of the figures collected during the last census of the Belgian population shows different trends in income in the north and south of the country: between 1981 and 1991, the average income increased by 44 % in Brussels, 59 % in Wallonia and 72 % in Flanders. Revenue in the Brussels region is clearly falling, while the gap is becoming wider between the Walloon and Flemish regions.

In the first quarter of 1999, the international quotation agency Moody's (*) positively assessed the economic situation in Flanders. The factors explaining this very favourable quotation are as follows:

— a positive evaluation of the Flemish economy overall, accounting for 70 % of Belgian exports,

— innovative industrial structures;

— a gross regional product per inhabitant in Flanders which is on a par with that of France, Germany and the United States;

— the fact that the sea ports of Antwerp, Ghent, Zeebrugge and Ostende alone account for 24 % of all goods traffic in western Europe;

— growing employment, accounting for 57 % of total employment in Belgium and as much as 61 % in the private sector;

— reduction of the public debt burden, as the Flemish government has on two successive occasions used part of its budget surplus to speed up repayments of the public debt.

(*) Index drawn up by the private American 'rating' company, providing an assessment of the solvency of enterprises chiefly on the basis of their share quotation on the stock exchange and their borrowing levels.

Table 10: Number of workers on 30 June 1997, by size of enterprise (in %)

(a) Breakdown for Belgium

Region	Number of workers per enterprise						
	Less than 10	10 to 49	50 to 99	100 to 199	200 to 499	500 to 999	1 000 +
Brussels region	13	12.5	14	16	18	22	31
Flemish region	59	61	60	56	56	48	51
Walloon region	28	26.5	26	28	26	30	18
Belgium	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

(b) Inter-regional breakdown

Region	Less than 10	10 to 49	50 to 99	100 to 199	200 to 499	500 to 999	1 000 +	Total
Brussels region	12	17	9	11	15	12	24	100
Flemish region	17	24	12	12	14	8	13	100
Walloon region	18	24	11	13	14	10	10	100
Belgium	16	23	11	12	14	9	15	100

SOURCE: INS (ONSS FIGURES); SYNOPTIC TABLE ADAPTED BY P. VERHELPEN (IESSID).

1.4.6. Employment by enterprise size

Table 10 enables a comparative analysis of the regional breakdown of workers by size of enterprise.

Brussels region

With 9.4 % of the total population, the Brussels region provides 17 % of the country's jobs. The breakdown of enterprises with respect to Belgium as a whole shows that Brussels accounts for 22 % of enterprises with 500 to 999 workers and 31 % of those with 1 000 or more workers. The inter-regional breakdown shows that 36 % of enterprises in Brussels employ over 500 workers whereas the average for Belgium is only 24 %.

The proportion of SMEs (less than 50 workers) is 29 % (average for Belgium: 39 %). Structurally, Brussels is a region of 'large enterprises'.

In the public sector, most of the authorities, international institutions, semi-public institutions, etc. are in Brussels. In the private sector, most institutions are in the service sector. The head offices of the major banks, insurance companies and the largest hotel chains are located in Brussels.

Flemish region

With 58 % of the total population, Flanders accounts for 57 % of Belgian employment. The breakdown of enterprises with respect to Belgium shows that Flanders accounts for 48 % of enterprises with 500 to 999 workers and 51 % of those with 1 000 or more workers. The inter-regional breakdown shows that 21 % of enterprises in Flanders employ over 500 workers, whereas the average for Belgium is 24 %. The proportion of SMEs is 41 % (average for Belgium: 39 %). Structurally, the breakdown of enterprises in Flanders is close to the average for Belgium.

Walloon region

With 32 % of the total population, Wallonia provides 26 % of the country's employment. The breakdown of enterprises with respect to Belgium shows that Wallonia accounts for 30 % of enterprises with 500 to 999 workers and 18 % of those with 1 000 or more workers. The inter-regional breakdown shows that 20 % of enterprises in Wallonia employ over 500 workers, whereas the national average is 24 %. The proportion of SMEs is 42 % (average for Belgium: 39 %). Structurally, Wallonia has the lowest proportion of enterprises with 500 or more workers (20 %).

1.5. Unemployment

1.5.1. Current trends in unemployment

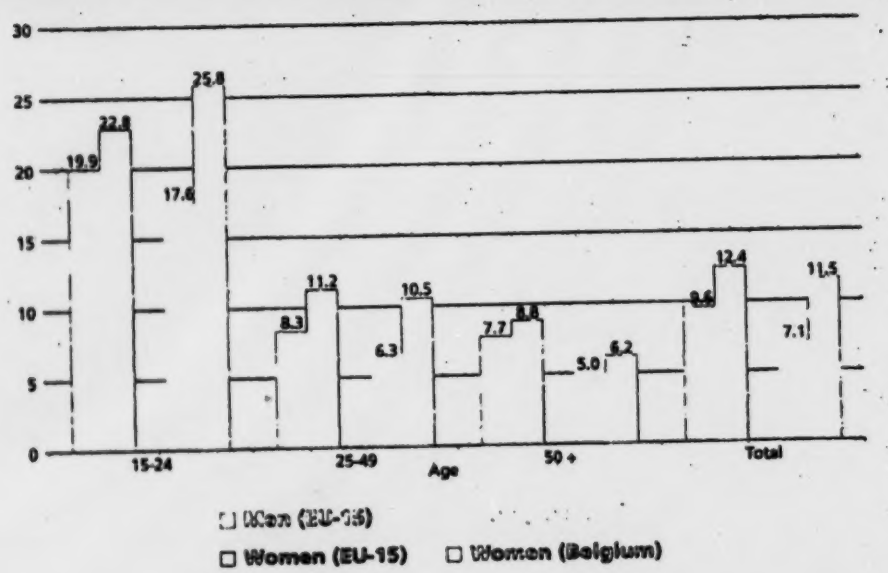
Table 11: Number of registered full-time unemployed people entitled to benefits; and unemployment rate with respect to the active population, as at 31 December 2000

	Flemish region	Walloon region	Brussels region	Belgium
Men	47 210	80 984	24 797	152 991
	4.7 %	13 %	16.3 %	8.4 %
Women	69 661	105 741	26 599	202 001
	8.3 %	21 %	17.4 %	13.3 %
Total	116 871	186 725	51 396	354 992
	6.3 %	16.6 %	16.8 %	10.6 %

SOURCES: PERCENTAGES: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR, COMMENTAIRES SUR LES CHIFFRES DE CHÔMAGE DU MOIS DE DÉCEMBRE 2000 ; FIGURES: NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT OFFICE, BULLETIN MENSUEL, DECEMBER 2000.

On 31 December 2000 there were 354 992 full-time unemployed people entitled to benefits, including 152 991 men and 202 001 women.

Figure 8: Unemployment rate by gender and by age, 1997 (as %)



SOURCE: EUROSTAT, LABOUR FORCE SURVEY, 1997.

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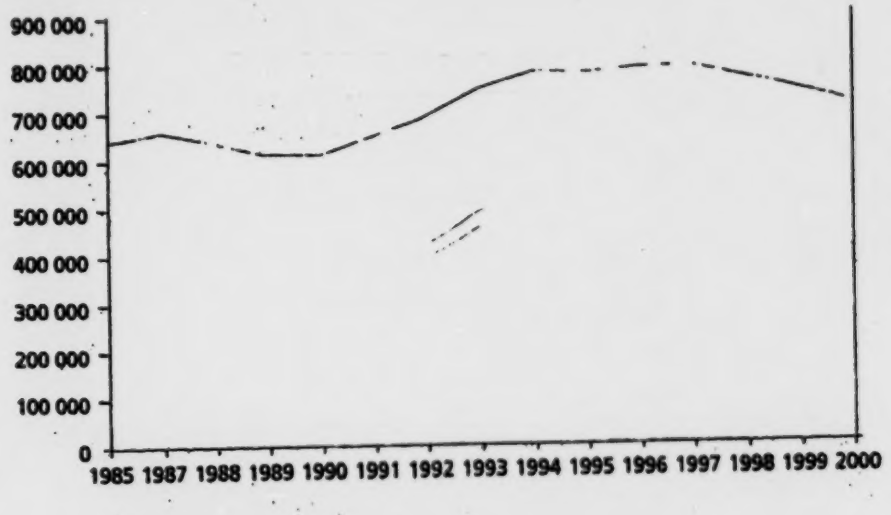
Compared with the European average, the unemployment rate in Belgium continues to be too high, although it is lower than the European average, except for young women where the rate appears higher in Belgium (25.8 %) than in the remainder of the European Union (22.8 %).

Figure 3 — Trends in the numbers of jobseekers not in employment and unemployed people not looking for work, 1985 to 2000 (30 November)


900 000
800 000
700 000
600 000
500 000
400 000
300 000
200 000
100 000
0
1985 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000
Unemployed people unavailable for social and family reasons
Full-time unemployed people entitled to benefits aged over 55 and not looking for work
Bridging pensions not looking for work
Voluntary jobseekers not in work
Compulsory jobseekers
Full-time unemployed job-seekers entitled to benefits

SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR, CHÔMAGE ET REMISE AU TRAVAIL — DONNÉES DE BASE (2000).

Even though the number of unemployed people remains unsatisfactory, there has been a regular fall since 1995.

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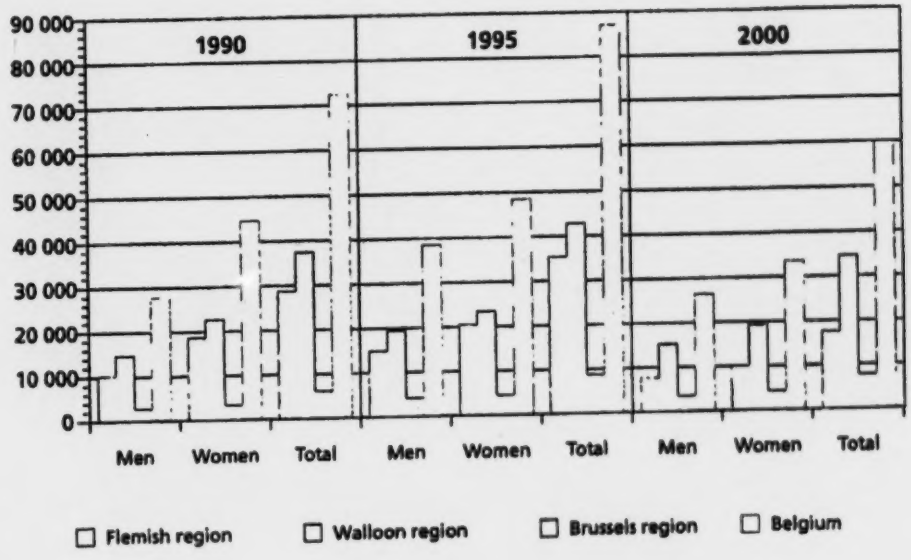
1.5.2. Unemployment among young people

The unemployment situation of today's young people can best be analysed by comparison with the situation in 1990.

Figure 10 — Trend in the number of full-time unemployed people entitled to benefits aged under 25, as at 31 December 1990, 1995 and 2000



SOURCE: ONEM-RVA, BULLETIN MENSUEL, DECEMBER 1990, 1995 AND 2000.

The unemployment rate among young people remains stable. While the unemployment rate among men has increased (except in the Brussels region), the unemployment rate among women has fallen in similar proportions.

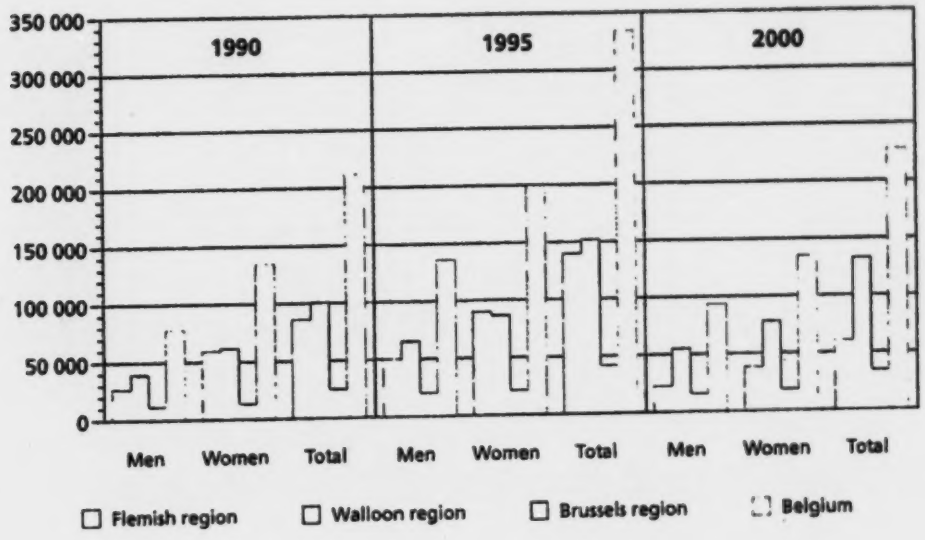
The Belgian action plan for employment (*) included among its priorities recommendations to improve the occupational integration of young jobseekers (guideline 1: combating youth unemployment). It is for this reason that the federal authorities entered into a cooperation agreement with the communities and the regions. Every young person aged under 25 who has been unemployed for five months and does not have the upper secondary education certificate is encouraged to attend intensive work experience leading, where possible, to integration into the employment market. Although different methods are being used in Flanders, Wallonia and the German-speaking community, the objectives being pursued are the same.

(*) Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour. *Investir dans la personne et l'emploi: Plan d'action belge 1999 établi dans le cadre des lignes directrices européennes pour l'emploi* : 1998.

1.5.3. Long-term unemployment

The same comparison technique can be used to analyse the long-term unemployment situation.

Figure 11 — Trends in the number of those unemployed for one year or more in comparison with total unemployment as at 31 December 1990, 1995 and 2000



SOURCE: ONEM-RVA, BULLETIN MENSUEL, DECEMBER 1990, 1995 AND 2000.

However, analysis of the figures shows that unemployed women far outstrip unemployed men. While, in formal terms, there may be equality between men and women in the working world, inequalities are continuing in practice.

Between 1990 and 1995 the percentage of long-term unemployed men and women increased substantially.

The Belgian action plan for employment also included among its priorities a plan to assist this group of unemployed people, starting with the least qualified (guideline 2: combating long-term unemployment). Here as well, all the authorities concerned entered into a cooperation agreement, scheduled for 1999/2000, to assist unemployed people aged between 25 and 45 who have been unemployed for 12 months and do not possess the upper secondary education certificate. This assistance takes the form of screening, diagnosis by the regional placement services and the enterprise and is followed by the implementation of an individual action plan.

Training schemes for unemployed people aged over 45 have also been organised, particularly in the Brussels region and in the German-speaking community.

1.5.4.

In conclusion, while the overall unemployment rate has been falling slowly since 1995, this is because the employment rate increased from 54.7 % in 1990 to 56.6 % in 1996 and is estimated at 57 % in 1997. This growth can be attributed largely to a major increase in the participation rate of women and a considerable upturn in part-time work. However, this growth has not been fast enough to absorb an unemployment rate which remains very high.

Lastly, the unemployment rate among young people aged less than 25 can be explained to some extent by the high educational participation rate, whereas the increase in the unemployment rate among the older age-groups can be attributed largely to early retirement.

Chapter 2
Description of the education system

2.1. Features specific to Belgium

Although Belgium shares many features with other western countries, it has its own particular dynamic. The system is shaped in practice by the interplay of specific political tensions that have had a major impact throughout the history of the education system. The development of education seems to be shaped by various equally important tensions which are still burning issues at the dawn of the 21st century.

The first of these tensions is between the Church and the State, particular status having been granted to Catholic education in school policy. This situation led to strong opposition between State education and private religious education and led to a 'school war' which was brought to a close in 1958 by the School Pact.

The second tension came into being towards the end of the 19th century when the dynamics of education took centre stage within social issues. It was at this time that progressive movements formulated plans to make education more democratic thereby calling into question the established social hierarchy.

The third main tension is generated by the problems surrounding language and culture. While education initially helped to create national unity and identity, it subsequently made it possible, under the impetus of various political currents, to highlight community identities through the affirmation of specific languages and cultures associated with separate regional entities.

2.2. The main founding principles

As these can be considered as the heritage of the unitary State, they are applied throughout Belgium.

2.2.1. Freedom of education

This principle is reflected:

(a) From the point of view of the organising authorities

The law of 29 May 1959 defines 'organising authorities' *(pouvoirs organisateurs)* as 'the authority, the legal or physical person(s) responsible for an educational institution'. Each organising authority may determine its own curricula, subject to ministerial approval.

In Belgium, there are three main types of organising authority in education:

(a) education organised by the community;

(b) subsidised official education organised by the provincial and municipal authorities;

(c) subsidised private education. This privately run education in particular includes private Catholic schools.

Each organising authority is entitled to set up any type of school: nursery, primary, secondary, higher, special, art, social advancement. All the schools administered by an organising authority other than the community are subsidised by the community provided that they comply with the legal provisions on the organisation of education and the application of linguistic laws.

It is therefore possible to speak of two education networks in Belgium.

(a) The network organised by the public authorities is called 'official education'. It is subdivided into two networks: the network including community schools and the network including schools run by provinces and municipalities.

(b) The network organised by private agencies is called 'private education'. It includes schools whose teaching is based on denominational values (mostly Catholic) and other 'non-denominational' values.

(b) From the point of view of parents' choices

The way in which education is organised means that parents have a completely free choice when selecting a school for their children and can select the appropriate religion, ideology or philosophy.

2.2.2. Compulsory education

Compulsory education, which was introduced in 1914, for children and adolescents aged 6 to 14 was extended to the age of 18 in 1983 by the law of 29 June. From the age of 15/16, teenagers may continue their education on a full-time or part-time basis. This measure, directly affecting vocational training, will be discussed in detail in Section 3.2.3.

2.2.3. The principle of free education

Education is free throughout the period of compulsory education. In the case of higher education (university or non-university), registration is subject to the payment of a registration fee called a *minerval* (tuition fee).

2.2.4. Co-education

A European directive of 9 February 1976 makes it compulsory for every Member State to take steps to ensure that men and women are treated equally from the point of view of working conditions and access to employment, training and vocational advancement. A law was therefore passed in order to remove any discrimination between boys and girls at school.

Table 12: Breakdown of the school population in the three networks, by level of education

	Community education	Subsidised official education	Private education
(a) French community — 1998/99 academic year			
Basic education	48 086	235 926	206 313
Secondary education	88 343	56 855	204 808
Total	**136 429**	**292 781**	**411 121**
(b) German-speaking community — 1999/2000 academic year			
Basic education	1 988	6 247	686
Secondary education	2 092	0	2 423
Total	**4 080**	**6 247**	**3 109**
(c) Flemish community — 1999/2000 academic year			
Basic education	91 011	148 788	435 127
Secondary education	70 336	36 710	323 981
Total	**161 347**	**185 498**	**759 108**

SOURCES: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY; MINISTRY OF THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY, EDUCATION SECTION, ANNUAIRE STATISTIQUE 1999/2000; MINISTRY OF THE FLEMISH COMMUNITY, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, ANNUAIRE STATISTIQUE 1999/2000.

2.3. Organisation of education

2.3.1. Constitutional amendment of 1988

Under the 1988 amendment of the Constitution, responsibilities for education were devolved to the communities. The federal legislator retained responsibility for only three areas:

— establishing the beginning and end of compulsory education;

— setting minimum conditions for the award of diplomas and certificates;

— the staff pension system.

This explains why the organisation and design of education differs at present between the north and south of Belgium. In this report, we shall try to highlight common as well as different features.

2.3.2. Structure and objectives of basic and secondary education

In each community, there are traditionally three levels of education:

(a) basic education,

(b) secondary education,

(c) higher education.

The Mission Decree of 24 July 1997 sets out general objectives for all basic and secondary education. There are four such objectives, stressing the personal and social development of the individual and the notion of citizenship. They are worded as follows:

— to promote self-confidence and the personal development of all pupils,

— to enable all pupils to acquire knowledge and the abilities that they need to be able to learn throughout their lives and to play an active part in economic, social and cultural life,

— to prepare all pupils to be responsible citizens, able to contribute to the development of a society which is democratic, mutually supportive, pluralist and open to other cultures,

— to provide all pupils with equal opportunities for social advancement.

2.3.3. Basic education

This education is divided into two levels, i.e. nursery and then primary education.

2.3.3.1. Nursery education

Nursery education has been an integral part of the education system since the 1960s: it is optional, free and mixed. This education is available for children aged from two and a half to six years in the French community. In the German-speaking community, the age of entry into nursery education was increased to three from the 1996–97 academic year. In the Flemish community, the age of entry into nursery education has also been increased to three. At present, for the country as a whole, the attendance rates are 95 % for children aged three, 97 % for children aged four and 100 % for children aged five and over.

From the nursery level onwards, except in the German-speaking community, special education is available for children with mental, physical, behavioural or sensory disabilities. The figures given in Table 13 take account of these children.

Table 13: Trends in the school population in nursery education, including all networks, 1980/81 to 1999/2000

Communities	Academic year								
	1980/81	1984/85	1990/91	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
Flemish	223 973	236 053	213 102	254 961	255 477	253 043	247 515	242 621	240 654
French	160 721(*)	159 636(*)	156 897	171 478	169 059	164 928	160 595	157 055	155 452
German-speaking			2 745	3 279	3 365	3 101	2 973	2 934	2 922
Total	384 694	395 689	372 744	429 718	427 901	421 072	411 083	402 610	399 028

(*) The German-speaking community became responsible for education only from 1989/90.

SOURCE: STATISTICAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION OF THE FLEMISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES.

In the country as a whole, nursery education is intended to develop children's specific potential and to educate them, through cognitive, social, emotional and psychomotor learning. This education also makes it possible to detect, at an early stage, the problems and disabilities of some children and to provide the necessary remedial measures.

2.3.3.2. Primary education

Primary education is intended for children aged 6 to 12 and includes six years of education.

In the Flemish community, education is organised year by year. In the German-speaking community, the six years are divided into three two-year cycles.

In the French community, the decree of 24 July 1997 defining the priority tasks of basic and secondary education and organising the structures through which they can be achieved, considers the final year of nursery education and the first eight years of compulsory education to be an educational continuum. It establishes a structure of four cycles:

(1) from the age of five to the end of the second year of primary education (from the age of five to eight);

(2) the third and fourth year of primary education (from the age of 8 to 10);

(3) the fifth and sixth year of primary education (from the age of 10 to 12);

(4) the first cycle of secondary education.

This structure should be completely in place by September 2005. It should:

— abolish notions of class and failure at the end of an academic year,

— promote continuing assessment,

— enable each child to learn at their own pace at school.

As matters stand at present, throughout the country, pupils cannot attend primary school for more than eight years, irrespective of their educational performance.

Table 14: Trends in the school population in primary education, including all networks, 1980/81 to 1999/2000

Community	1980/81	1984/85	1990/91	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
Flemish	476 226	429 567	430 578	412 589	412 723	417 369	424 110	429 956	434 272
French	381 192*	338 640*	309 482	320 637	324 319	327 688	331 495	333 270	328 221
German-speaking			4 822	5 226	5 462	5 648	5 820	5 913	5 999
Total	857 418	768 207	744 882	738 452	742 504	750 705	761 425	769 139	768 492

(*) The German-speaking community became responsible for education only from 1989/90.

SOURCE: STATISTICAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION OF THE FLEMISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES.

The general objectives of primary education in the French community can be summarised under three main headings:

— learning to read, giving priority to mastering meaning, writing skills and communication skills,

— mastering basic mathematical tools enabling the resolution of problems,

— helping children to achieve the general objectives of compulsory education through all educational activities.

The way in which these general objectives are translated into practice involves the acquisition of competences. Perceiving children's education in this way is one of the

strong points of the Mission Decree of 24 July 1997. The notion of 'competence' is defined in this decree as follows: 'the ability to put an organised set of knowledge, expertise and relational skills to use to accomplish a number of tasks'.

The Mission Decree also introduces the concept of 'core competences' described as 'a reference framework presenting, in a structured way, the basic competences to be mastered at the end of a stage of education, for instance at the end of the primary education cycle'. It is the task of each organising authority to construct its curricula and to design learning methods in a way that is in keeping with the key concepts set out in the Mission Decree.

At the end of the sixth year of primary education, children receive a certificate which they can use to move on to secondary education. Some pupils, who are educationally backward or less able to follow education that is largely theoretical, do not obtain this certificate. They are then admitted to year B1 of the first cycle of secondary education, a transitional year during which their basic education is completed (see Figure 12).

2.3.4. Secondary education

This second main level of education is for children aged 12 to 18. It may take two forms:

— type II or 'traditional' education governed by the laws of 1957, which has been retained only in the French community;

— type I or 'reformed' education (*Vernieuwd Secundair Onderwijs — VSO* in the Dutch-speaking part of the country), set up by the law of 9 July 1971.

2.3.4.1. Type II or 'traditional' education

This is organised as two three-year cycles: the lower cycle and the upper cycle. Only 10 schools are continuing to use this type of education in Belgium (all in the French-speaking part of the country). This type of secondary education no longer exists in the Flemish region or in the German-speaking community.

2.3.4.2. Type I or 'reformed' education

Set up by the law of 19 July 1971, reformed education includes general, technical, art and vocational education.

— general secondary education (*enseignement secondaire général/algemeen secundair onderwijs — ESG/ASO*) places the emphasis on broad-ranging academic education providing a solid foundation for higher education;

— technical secondary education (*enseignement secondaire technique/technisch secundair onderwijs — EST/TSO*) teaches general and other more technical subjects so that students can practice a trade or enter higher education;

— art secondary education (*enseignement secondaire artistique /kunst secundair onderwijs — ESA/KSO*) combines general education and training in an artistic discipline enabling students, at the end of this education, to practice a trade or enter higher education;

— vocational secondary education (*enseignement secondaire professionnel/beroeps secundair onderwijs — ESP/BSO*) is essentially geared towards practical skills

supplementing basic academic education. It thus provides the skills needed for a specific trade. It is possible for students to go on to higher education.

This division attempts to gear education to suit pupils' needs and potential, the main objectives being:

— progressive guidance of pupils,

— different choices of education as a result of the many options organised by schools and a set of complex bridges via which it is possible to move from one option to another,

— to ensure that the certificates awarded at the end of secondary education are equivalent and open the way to higher education.

The flow chart (Figure 12) highlights the structure introduced to achieve these objectives along two axes, one horizontal and one vertical.

Horizontally, the six years are divided into three two-year cycles.

This structure may be optionally supplemented by a seventh year after the third cycle of *EST/TSO, ESA/KSO* or *ESP/BSO*, or by a fifth year after the second cycle of *ESP/BSO* (*).

The first cycle corresponds to the first and second years of secondary education. In the first year, at least 27 of the 32 scheduled weekly periods are devoted to basic education which is identical for all the pupils of a school.

In the second year, a minimum of 24 weekly periods are set aside for basic education, including at least 14 that are identical for all pupils.

The principle of a year B1 has been taken up in reformed secondary education.

The second cycle includes the third and fourth years. From the second cycle, pupils start to choose a particular specialisation in general, technical, art or vocational secondary education.

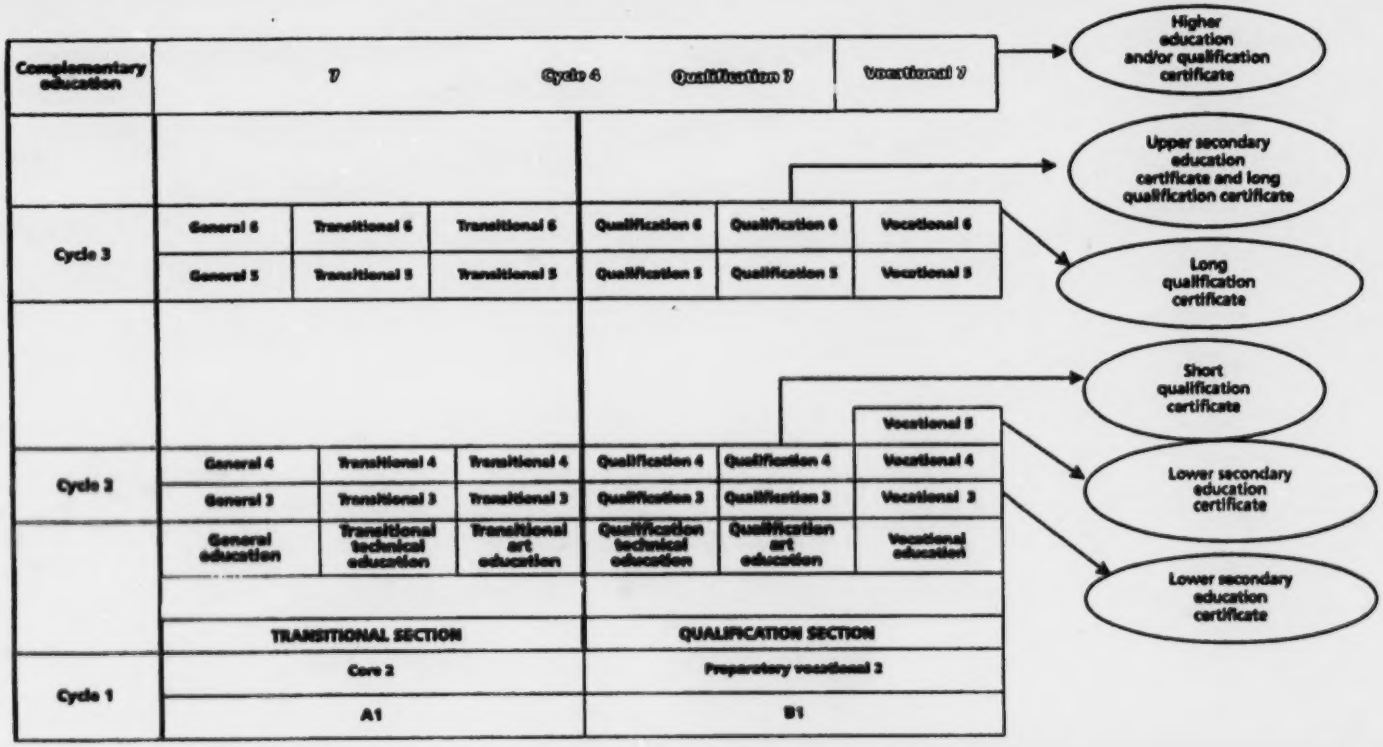
The third cycle corresponds to the fifth and sixth years which must be followed in the same educational specialisation. The subjects studied are geared to the final choice of an occupation or any plans for higher education. A number of options or sections start only in this third cycle. In technical, art or vocational education, there is a possibility of a seventh year in vocational education and pupils obtain a secondary education certificate that may be validated.

Vertically, from the third year (year 1 of cycle 2) pupils enter either the transitional education section or the qualification education section. The purpose of the transitional section is to prepare for higher education, although there is nothing to stop pupils completing their education in this stream from entering working life.

In contrast, the qualification section is intended for entry into working life although pupils can (in theory), in view of the equivalence of certificates, move on to higher education.

(*) See Annex 1.

Figure 12 — Simplified flow chart of 'reformed' education at the time of its introduction in 1971



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, 'PETIT GUIDE PRATIQUE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT OBLIGATOIRE EN COMMUNAUTÉ FRANÇAISE', 1998.

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2.3.4.3. Trends in secondary education since devolution to the communities

Since the amendment of the Constitution in 1988, responsibilities for education have been devolved to the communities. Since then there have been different trends in secondary education. Although in practice the general objectives remain more or less the same in the north and south of Belgium, organisational structures are becoming increasingly different. For instance:

— At the beginning of the 1988/89 academic year, **Flanders** introduced the 'unitary structure'. The organisation of the first cycle remains unchanged. In the second and third cycles, however, all pupils follow the same basic subjects whatever the type of education that they are following: general secondary education (*ASO*), technical secondary education (*TSO*), art secondary education (*KSO*) or vocational secondary education (*BSO*).

  This common core of education is supplemented by an optional part designed to prepare pupils either for higher education or for the practice of a profession. This measure also made it possible to rationalise the number of options introduced by reformed education. The most recent decree enacted by the Ministry of the Flemish Community on 14 July 1998 steps up this process of rationalisation.

— In the **French community,** other measures were taken: for instance, in 1994–95, the old system of class promotion year by year was abolished in cycle 1. At the end of cycle 1, pupils who have not reached the level of competence required to move on to cycle 2 may attend a second supplementary year at the end of which they enter the transitional stream or the qualification stream which have been retained in the French community.

  The most recent decree enacted by the government of the French community on 24 July 1997, known as the Mission Decree, sets out the notion of 'core competences" (*) to be achieved at the end of each cycle.

— In the north as in the south of Belgium, the lower secondary education certificate has been abolished and replaced by a cycle 2 secondary education certificate.

At the end of the second year of cycle 3, an upper secondary education certificate (in the French community) and a secondary education diploma (in the Flemish and German-speaking communities) are awarded for secondary education.

It can therefore be seen that reforms have taken place at a rapid pace. They should be seen:

(1) as a response to the OECD report (1992) which highlighted the general quality of the education system in Belgium but also the worrying number of pupils repeating years. The measures taken are therefore intended to combat failure at school;

(2) in a context of budget economies, in view of all the rationalisation measures that have been taken.

Numbers in secondary education have fallen by 65 065, i.e. approximately 7.7 % in comparison with the 1980/81 academic year.

(*) Decree of 24 July 1997 defining the priority tasks of basic and secondary education and organising the structures through which they can be achieved. Article 5.2 'Core competences': a reference framework presenting, in a structured manner, the basic competences to be acquired up to the end of the first eight years of compulsory education and those to be mastered by the end of each stage of this education as they are considered necessary for social integration and continued education.

Table 15: Trends in the number of students in secondary education, 1980/81 to 1999/2000

Community	Academic year								
	1980/81	1984/85	1990/91	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
Flemish	501 587	492 931	456 979	440 159	452 096	450 793	441 867	436 025	431 027
French	347 582 ()	366 151 ()	362 972	348 924	349 166	348 550	349 979	350 006	348 562
German-speaking			3 725	4 239	4 358	4 460	4 466	4 445	4 515
Total	849 169	859 082	823 676	793 322	805 620	803 803	795 312	790 476	784 104

() The German-speaking community became responsible for education only from 1989/90.

SOURCES: STATISTICAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION OF THE FLEMISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES.

2.3.4.4. Special secondary education

The figures in Table 15 include pupils attending special secondary education. As at the nursery and primary levels, special secondary education is available for pupils who, for physical or mental reasons, are unable to attend ordinary education.

This special education takes four forms in keeping with pupils' disabilities:

— **Form 1**: social education for integration into a sheltered environment;

— **Form 2**: general and social education for integration into a sheltered living and working environment;

— **Form 3**: social and vocational education for integration into a normal living and working environment;

— **Form 4**: preparation for higher education and integration into working life (special general, technical and art education).

2.3.5. Higher education

2.3.5.1.

The final level of education in Belgium is higher education which includes both university and non-university higher education which is often known simply as higher education (*enseignement supérieur*).

The latter takes the form of a cycle of three or four years (short higher education) or two cycles of two and two/three years (long higher education). At the end of short higher education, a specialist year may be organised. At the end of long higher education, it is possible to take a diploma in specialised higher education (*diplôme d'études supérieures specialisées — DESS*) which is a higher education diploma of the same type as the French *DESS* (maximum two years).

Since the 1995/96 academic year in the Flemish community, and since 1996/97 in the French community, most of this non-university education has taken place in high schools (*hautes écoles/ hogescholen*).

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We have decided to look at this type of education in Chapter 3 in relation to a judgment of the European Court of Justice known as the Gravier case, which defines the notion of vocational training as follows:

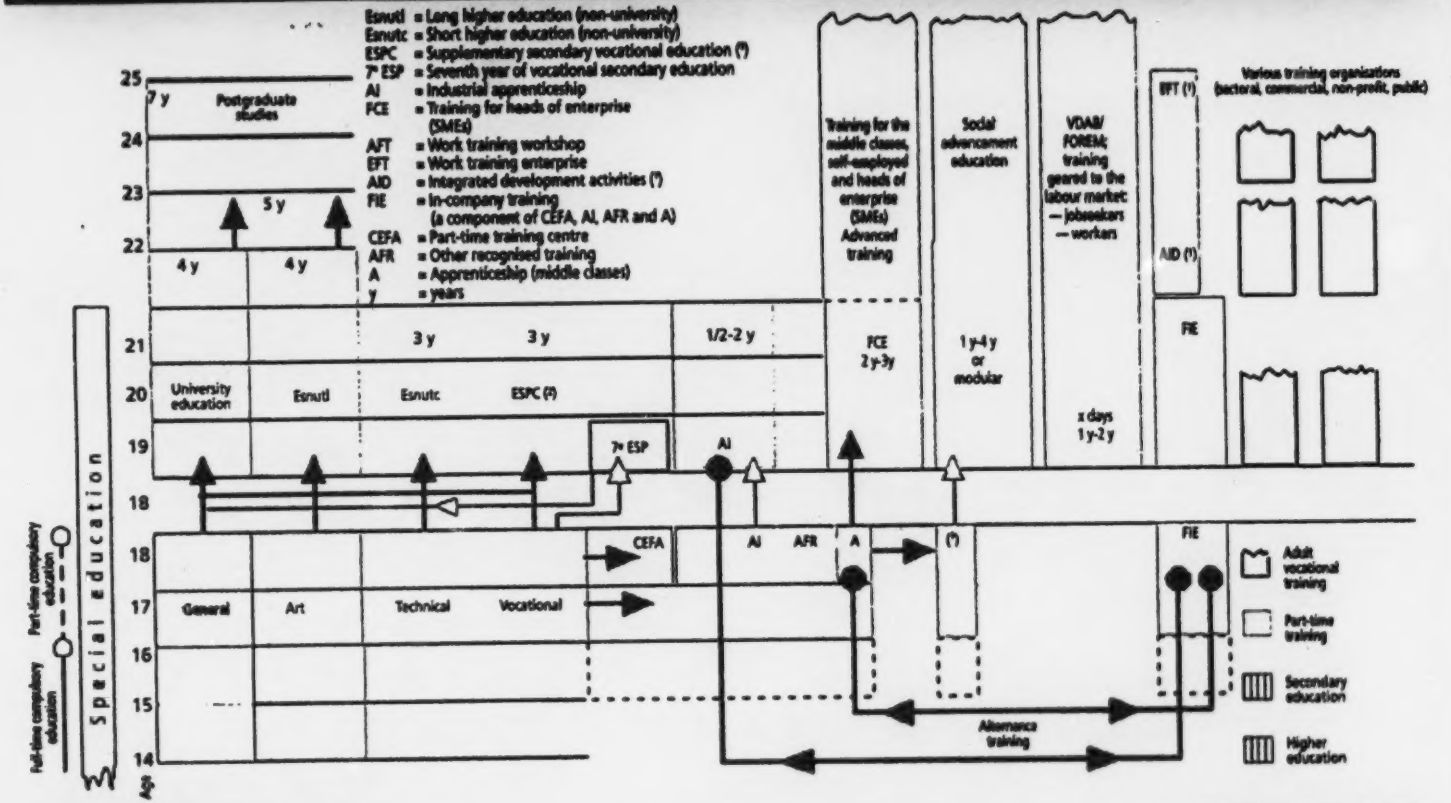
'Any form of education which prepares for a qualification for a particular profession, trade or employment or which provides the necessary skills for such a profession, trade or employment is vocational training, whatever the age and the level of training of the pupils or students, even if the training programme includes an element of general education.'(*)

2.3.5.2.

According to this definition, university education, non-university further education and technical and vocational secondary education come under the heading of vocational training in the sense in which it is understood by the European Court of Justice. The same does not apply to general secondary education.

(*) Judgment of 30 May 1989 — Case 242/87, Commission v Council, Rec, 1989 — p. 1449.

Figure 13 — Vocational education and training in Belgium



(*) Valid for the French and German-speaking communities only.
(*) Only for the Flemish community.

SOURCES: CEDEFOP, R. GEERS, VDAB.

Chapter 3
The vocational education and training system

3.1. History of vocational education and training ([10])

3.1.1.

During the 19th century the first factories and major production units, bringing together workers and employees charged with increasingly complex tasks, were being created throughout Europe and the industrialised countries. As elsewhere, this raised the problem in Belgium of training this workforce for the practice of their occupations and trades. It would take too much space to describe the genesis and development of this movement in the trade guilds. The action they took and its repercussions had a great deal of impact in the major towns of Flanders and Wallonia and in Brussels.

3.1.2.

This 'on the job' training, organised by master craftsmen and journeymen for apprentices (the training of those without skills by those with skills), was the starting point for the vocational training movement in Belgium, since employers and technical managers in large firms were first to feel the need to provide special training for young workers starting out in a trade.

3.1.3.

This movement involved a minority of workers. At the outset it was only the most able who received training, i.e. those who were to be the lynchpin between the proprietor and his shareholders and the unskilled and therefore interchangeable masses at the bottom of the ladder.

3.1.4.

The real vocational training movement was, however, essentially born of parallel, or even simultaneous, actions on the one hand by militant socialists (First International 1866) and on the other hand later by the Catholic reaction symbolised by the encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (15 May 1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno*. The result of this was that technical and vocational education was initially organised exclusively by the Catholic Church and by regional, provincial and municipal bodies. The State concentrated largely on general secondary and higher education ([11]) and universities. The same duality between free education and State education was to be found in universities.

([10]) The history of vocational education and training highlights the complex nature of the sectors, which is still to be found today.

([11]) In Belgium, the term 'higher education' covers all post-secondary education (in and outside of universities) i.e., here, post-secondary education outside of universities.

3.1.5.

The history of education in Belgium is marked by a long educational war between the supporters of private education and the supporters of public education. Education is the stumbling block on which many governments have fallen.

This conflict came to an end in 1958 when a historical political compromise agreement, known as the School Pact, was signed by the Belgian Socialist Party, the Liberal Party and the Christian Social Party. This political agreement covered basic, secondary and higher education and was placed on an official footing by the law of 29 May 1959, known as the School Pact Law.

Under this law, the State finances all public education and part of 'subsidised' education. The State appoints and pays teachers, pays grants for operating costs and some allied costs. It builds or helps to finance school buildings and pays operating costs on the basis of the number of pupils, under an overall agreement entitling the organising authorities (see Section 2.2.1) to carry out unified action under State control.

3.1.6.

This brief history would be incomplete if it did not include a comparison of education and vocational training for men and women.

For men, so called 'industrial' education was based on the scientific and technical instruction of workers. Vocational education was, in contrast, craft based or geared towards major industry. These types of education provided a basis for most of the technical and vocational education set up between 1850 and 1950.

During this same period, technical and vocational education for women was very different from that for men. There was no attempt to provide systematic scientific and technical approaches in women's education. Working women were devalued in comparison with mothers, wives and housewives. All the political parties defended this 'female ideal', i.e. educating women to be good housewives. Many of the technical and vocational sections whose students are predominantly women can still be seen as a prolongation of the pre-1950 day schools.

3.1.7.

In 1914 Belgium enacted a law introducing compulsory education for all children aged between 6 and 14.

In 1983, this compulsory education was extended to the age of 18. The consequence of this measure was to introduce part-time education. This is organised for young people who, from the age of 15/16, as a result of problems at school or simply by choice, take this route combining general education at school with vocational education offered by various training agencies (see 3.2.3.1).

3.1.8.

Many contacts have been established between enterprises and technical schools since the beginning of technical and vocational education. It was in the interests of enterprises to ensure that their skill requirements were reflected in the curricula of

technical schools and it was in the interests of schools to educate pupils to enable them to find jobs at the end of their education.

The practical result of this cooperation between schools and enterprises was that factory and workplace representatives regularly sat on examination boards and students' efforts were often crowned with the offer of employment in addition to a certificate or diploma.

3.1.9.

These encounters were perhaps the starting point for the joint management of vocational training activities, especially when these activities were targeted more directly at workers from enterprises attempting to improve their knowledge, to obtain a qualification and often also to obtain a promotion.

Evening classes were in fact a mirror image of day classes. Employers, however, preferred 'evening class graduates' with vocational experience. Meanwhile, politicians from all sides were meeting for consultation.

3.1.10.

The years after the 1939–45 war had shown that a succession of ineffective budgets had made it impossible to keep up with technical progress and had introduced a degree of mediocrity into all technical and vocational schools. This mismatch between the education received at school and the requirements of the labour market was particularly serious between the 1960s and 1974, when enterprises were modernising and trades were changing. Constant development and retraining therefore became indispensable.

3.1.11.

In order to meet this imbalance between supply and demand, the various ministries concerned attempted to introduce measures to remedy the situation. In 1963, the Ministry of Employment and Labour (*Ministère de l'emploi et du travail*/*Ministerie van Tewerkstelling en Arbeid*) opened the doors of the *ONEM*/*RVA* centres, which had up to then been reserved for vocational training for the unemployed, to workers from enterprise.

In the same year the law on 'social advancement' was passed, granting a maximum of one week per year of educational leave for general and social education to workers aged under 25. Provision was also made for social advancement allowances (bonuses on successful completion of evening class education) and an entitlement to credit hours (see Annex 4), but only for vocational training schemes. The 1973 law on credit hours introduced a joint financing system by the State and employers. In 1974, credit hours were extended to general education courses.

3.1.12.

In 1976, the French Cultural Council opted for an overall decree relating to the whole sector of permanent education for adults. The purpose of this decree was to promote organisations whose aim is to train critical and responsible citizens and also, as regards associations, people working in the social, cultural, economic and political sectors.

3.1.13.

One of the main features of the 1980s was the fight against unemployment. Particular attention was paid to youth unemployment with attempts being made to find both preventive and curative measures. The starting point was to extend compulsory education. From the point of view of vocational training for young people, this measure was an important step forward. In order to reduce unemployment, the training supply for unemployed people was stepped up. The funds that *ONEMIRVA* and the non-profit-making associations needed to train these unemployed people came from their respective communities and the European Social Fund (ESF).

Various legislative measures reorganised the training and continuing education supply in the 1980s. Distance education was reorganised in 1984. A law of 1985 replaced the credit hours system by paid educational leave (see Section 3.3.3).

The repercussions of the reform of the State were another feature of the 1980s. In 1988, the *Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle — FOREM* (Community and Regional Office for Vocational Training) in the Walloon region, set up in the same year, and the *Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding — VDAB* (Flemish Office for Placement and Vocational Training) in the Flemish community, set up in 1984, took responsibility, at community level, for the various aspects of vocational training for adult jobseekers.

3.1.14.

In the 1990s, other types of vocational training acquired legal status, particularly in the area of training for the middle classes. During the 1990s, many non-profit-making associations (especially in the Walloon region) launched training and socio-occupational integration initiatives which were initially rather piecemeal.

3.1.15.

In 1993, powers over vocational training and social advancement were transferred from the French community to the Walloon region and to the French Community Commission of the Brussels region.

In 1994, the Brussels region set up its own vocational training agency, the *Institut bruxellois francophone pour la formation professionnelle — IBFFP* (French-Speaking Brussels Institute for Vocational Training) commonly known as Brussels-Training.

Figure 14 — Development of the vocational education and training systems (*)

Belgium, Flemish community and region, French community, German-speaking community, Walloon region, Brussels region

EDUCATION	(*)	VOCATIONAL TRAINING
Introduction of compulsory education from 6 to 14 (L)	← 1914	
"School Pact" (L)	← 1959→	Organisation of vocational training in trades and workshops (AR)
	1963→	Extension of continuing vocational training by the National Employment Office (ONEM/RVA) (AR)
		Allowance for workers undertaking social advancement (L)
Creation of reformed secondary education (L)	← 1971	
	1973 →	Credit hours to promote workers' social advancement (L)
	1974 →	Permanent education in the agricultural sector (AR)
	1976 →	Reform of training for the middle classes (AR)
Powers over education transferred from the State to the three communities (Const)	← 1980 →	Powers over vocational training and social advancement transferred from the State to the three communities (Const & Lsp)
Compulsory education extended to 16 for full-time education and 18 for part-time education or training (L)	← 1983 →	Introduction of 'industrial apprenticeship' (L)
	1984 →	Creation of the Flemish Office for Placement and Vocational Training (VDAB), (D)
	1984 →	Regulation of vocational training in the agricultural sector (D)
	1985 →	Paid educational leave replaces credit hours (L)
	1987 →	Creation of the 'employment-training' agreement (AR)
	→	Introduction of an authorisation for vocational apprenticeship enterprises (EAP) (Arr)
Communities' powers (with the exception of three areas) over education increased (Const)	← 1988 →	Creation of the Community and Regional Office for Vocational Training and Employment (FOREM) (D)
'Unitary structure' in secondary education (Arr)	← 1990	
Creation of part-time education centres (CDO) (D)	←	
Reform of social advancement education (EPS), (D)	← 1991 →	Creation of the Flemish Institute for Small Business (VIZO) (D)
Creation of alternance education and training centres (CEFA) (D)	← →	Creation of the Institute for Continuing Training for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (IFPME) (D)
	1993 →	Transfer of powers over vocational training and social advancement from the French community to the Walloon region and to the French Community Commission of the Brussels region (D)
Non-university education consolidated in high schools (hogescholen) (D)	← 1994→	Creation of the French-speaking Brussels Institute for Vocational Training (IBFFP) (D)
Non-university education consolidated in high schools (hautes ecoles) (D)	← 1995→	Work training enterprises (EFT) replace the EAP (Arr)
	→	Introduction of lifelong learning for the middle classes and small and medium-sized enterprises in the Walloon region, the French community and the French Community Commission of the Brussels region (A coop)
Creation of part-time education centres (D)	← 1996	
Reforms of basic and secondary education (tasks and structure) (D)	← 1997	
Reform of secondary education (D) and the psychological, medical and social centres (CLB)	← 1998→	Reform of legislation on industrial apprenticeship (L)
	→	Trials of modular methods of vocational training
	→	Introduction of special rules for paid educational leave for employees of small and medium-sized enterprises (AR)
	1999→	Cooperation agreement between the Walloon region and the French community for the organisation of an alternance qualification training stream (D)
	→	Reform of social advancement education

(*) Constitution (Const), Laws (L), Special Laws (Lsp), Royal Decrees (AR), Decrees (D), Orders (Arr) of the communities and regions, and Cooperation Agreements (A coop).

(*) The dates given are those of the year of the legislation relating to the various corresponding headings.

3.2. Initial vocational education and training

3.2.1. Introduction

Many young people complete their compulsory education in full-time education in one or other of the streams described in Chapter 2.

3.2.2. Full-time technical and vocational education

3.2.2.1. Trends in the school population

Cross-analysis of Tables 15 and 16 shows an increase in the school population in technical and vocational education.

Table 16: Trends in the school population in full-time technical and vocational education, 1990/91 to 1999/2000

Community	Academic year						
	1990/91	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
Flemish	161 712	164 916	157 883	167 530	166 820	164 333	160 955
French (and German-speaking)	120 167	111 966	112 913	117 995	123 874	123 011	122 710
Total	**281 879**	**276 882**	**270 796**	**285 525**	**290 694**	**287 344**	**283 665**
As percentage of total in secondary education (Table 15)	34.2	34.9	33.6	35.5	36.5	36.4	36.2

SOURCE: TABLE CREATED BY THE AUTHOR AND CEDEFOP FROM THE STATISTICAL YEARBOOKS OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF EACH OF THE THREE COMMUNITIES.

In their *Analyse descriptive des effectifs et modélisation du flux des étudiants dans l'enseignement supérieur de la Communauté française de Belgique* ('Descriptive analysis of numbers and modelling of the flows of students in higher education in the French community of Belgium'), produced in December 1998, the *Université Catholique de Louvain* and the *Université Libre de Bruxelles* showed that the third year of secondary education (year 1 of cycle 2) is crucial in students' educational development. Students who have completed cycle 1 (see Figure 12) with a 'restriction' are then channelled into the qualification stream. The same applies in the Flemish community, where students, although attending the 'unitary structure', are also channelled into technical or vocational education if they obtain a certificate 'with restriction' at the end of one or other year of secondary education.

The above-mentioned study also makes the following comment: most students who are one or two years behind a 'normal' educational progression are to be found in this qualification stream.

3.2.2.2. Qualitative aspects of vocational and technical education

While the main objective of the Royal Decree of 29 June 1984 (adopted before education was devolved fully to the communities) was to make vocational education less isolated by including bridges between this kind of education and technical or general education in legislation and giving students an opportunity to obtain the same certificates as those awarded in other forms of education, it did not have the expected effects. A comment by the Federation of Belgian Enterprises (*FEB*) ([13]) is revealing in this respect.

The *FEB* noted that Belgium, in comparison with its neighbours, has a relatively high proportion of highly skilled workers but also has much higher numbers of people with few skills. The *FEB* also noted that many jobseekers cannot be directly integrated into the labour market. The issue here may be one of inadequate qualification compounded by a lack of motivation.

Table 17: Level of education of the population aged 25 to 59, 1997 (in %)

Education	Belgium	Germany	France	Netherlands
Lower secondary	39.3	17.2	37.3	34.3
Upper secondary	33.6	56.1	43.4	42.0
Higher	27.0	22.5	19.3	23.7

SOURCE: *EUROSTAT*

The *FEB* therefore proposed in all its recommendations that technical and vocational education should be (re-)upgraded as a priority, so that this stream can become a high quality one – and not a second choice – likely to attract young people wishing to obtain an initial qualification offering real employment prospects.

To meet this wish, the Flemish and French communities set up, at the beginning of the 1990s, commissions responsible for remedying the problem. The outcome of their work is discussed in further detail in Section 5.1.

([13]) *FEB*: *Fédération des entreprises de Belgique* (Federation of Belgian Enterprises), established in 1895, works at federal level:
- to promote the interests of enterprise with the government, the authorities and trade union organisations;
- to represent the sectoral federations in respect of the various institutions (for instance the Central Economic Council);
- to negotiate, at multisectoral level, agreements applicable to all enterprises and all workers in the private sector in the form, for instance, of National Labour Council and multisectoral agreements.

3.2.2.3. The objectives of technical and vocational secondary education

The Mission Decree of 24 July 1997 defines (for the French community) more specific objectives for technical and vocational education, i.e.:

— all training to be qualifying,

— mastery of final competences, and

— the knowledge that all pupils must have acquired at the end of the qualification section in accordance with the training profile defined by the Community Commission for Occupations and Qualifications (*CCPQ*) (see Section 5.1.1 below).

A systematic revision of training profiles, as well as required competences and proposed options, started in the second half of 2000. The decree also stresses the acquisition of basic competences in communication in a modern language other than French, when the learning of a modern language is included in the curriculum.

In the Flemish community, the decree of 14 July 1998 setting out various measures relating to secondary education provides a number of definitions, some of which are fairly similar to those in the Mission Decree, and specifies that the Flemish government may, depending on technological change and/or new labour market needs, set up new 'structural subdivisions', i.e. new types of training preparing students for the practice of new occupations.

3.2.2.4. Curricula

In the French community, grouped options of 21 to 25 periods per week are organised in cycles 2 and 3 of technical qualification education and the same cycles of vocational education, alongside common general education (10 to 12 periods). These options include the following nine sectors: agriculture, industry, construction, hotels and restaurants, clothing, arts, economics, personal services and applied sciences.

Table 18: Technical and vocational education — economics sector

(a) Technical education

Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Management	Accounting and management computing Distribution Computerised management techniques (R)
Secretarial	Secretarial — office automation Administration (R)
Modern languages - public relations	Modern languages — office automation Reception — tourism

(b) Vocational education

Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Sales — product display	Sales — product display
Office work	Office work
	Reception monitoring (R)

R: remedial and/or reorientation activities.

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR COMPULSORY EDUCATION, FULL-TIME ORDINARY SECONDARY EDUCATION: GUIDELINES FOR THE 1998/99 ACADEMIC YEAR.

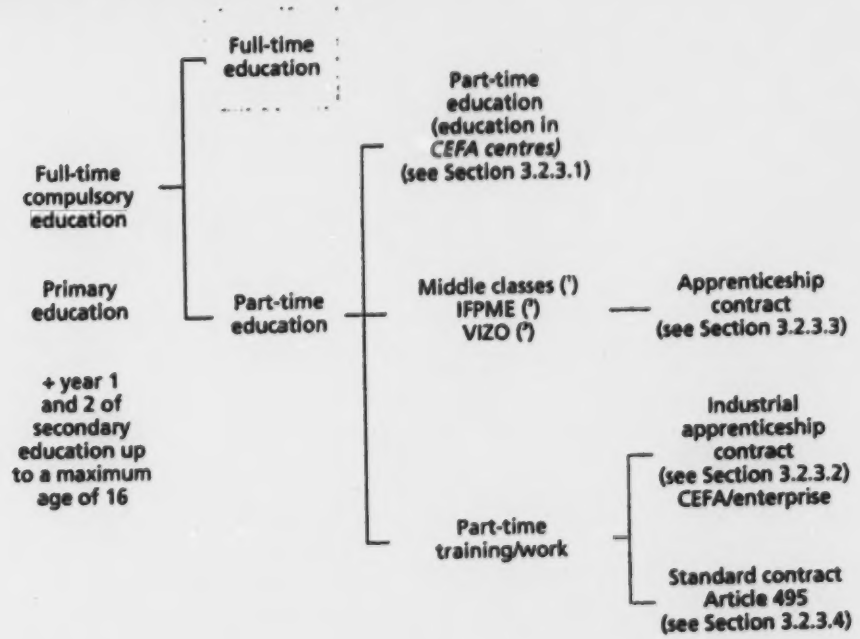
By way of illustration, Table 18 looks at grouped options in the economics sector in technical and vocational education.

In the Flemish community, alongside basic education, students may choose an option from a wide range of disciplines. Examples include sport, automobile engineering, construction, decorative techniques, glass-making, maritime training, etc.

3.2.3. Part-time education

Young people aged 16 or over can also continue their education in a part-time compulsory education system. This system particularly concerns young people who have failed at school. It is also open to young people aged 15 who have completed the first two years of secondary education.

Figure 15 — The different ways in which compulsory education can be completed (Law of 29 June 1983)


Full-time education
Part-time education (education in CEFA centres) (see Section 3.2.3.1)
Full-time compulsory education
Primary education
+ year 1 and 2 of secondary education up to a maximum age of 16
Part-time education
Middle classes (*) IFPME (*) VIZO (*)
Apprenticeship contract (see Section 3.2.3.3)
Industrial apprenticeship contract (see Section 3.2.3.2) CEFA/enterprise
Part-time training/work
Standard contract Article 495 (see Section 3.2.3.4)

(*) See Annex 4.
(*) *Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites entreprises* (Institute for Continuing Training for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises).
(*) *Vlaams Instituut voor Zelfstandig Ondernemen* (Flemish Institute for Small Business).

SOURCE: FIGURE PRODUCED BY THE AUTHORS AND CEDEFOP

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This compulsory part-time education takes three forms:

— part-time education,

— industrial apprenticeship,

— approved training schemes: chiefly the apprenticeship organised by *IFPME* (*Institut de Formation Permanente pour les Classes Moyennes et les Petites et Moyennes Entreprises* — Institute for Continuing Training for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises) in the French community and *VIZO* (*Vlaams Instituut voor Zelfstandig Ondernemen — Flemish Institute for Small Business*) in the Flemish community.

The substantial documentation that was collected to draft this monograph would seem to show that in Belgium vocationally oriented education for young people in compulsory education and beyond compulsory education takes place largely within the education system. The number of young people attending training under apprenticeship schemes remains very low, although it is increasing slightly from year to year.

In 1990 a Flemish community decree placed this type of education on a formal footing. In 1993, an 'education charter' was signed by the partners responsible for the education and enterprise worlds in the French community. In 1996, a German-speaking community decree also organised this part-time education within the framework of vocational education.

The law of 29 June 1983, extending compulsory education to the age of 18, also gave students aged 15/16 (see Section 2.2.2) the opportunity to complete their compulsory education as normal students in part-time vocational secondary education. We shall look at the various opportunities available for students who wish to enter this alternance stream.

This new structure of vocational training enables young people to consolidate their practical education while completing their academic education.

3.2.3.1. Part-time vocational education

(a) General principles and target groups

Part-time vocational education (*enseignement professionnel à horaire réduit — EHR*) is organised in the three communities at the lower and upper vocational secondary level. This education is intended to promote the occupational integration of young people and is organised in cycles 2 and 3 of secondary education. It is targeted at two separate groups of young people:

— Under-18s, aged:

  • 15 who have completed, whether successfully or not, the first two years of full-time secondary education;

  • a minimum of 16 whatever their prior educational history;

— 18-25-year olds who have concluded:

  • an apprenticeship contract for occupations carried out by employees;

  • an employment training agreement;

  • or any other form of contract or agreement recognised by labour legislation and coming within the framework of alternance training which has been approved by the government of the French or Flemish community (part-time

employment contract, *ONEM* work experience contract, *VDAB* training, *FOREM*, *VIZO*, etc.).

The work experience, agreements and contracts mentioned above must be directly related to the education that students are receiving. Pupils from special education can enter *EHR* only if they have a reorientation notice issued by the *PMS* centre which is responsible for guidance at the special education school that they are leaving. Students cannot be registered for training schemes leading to the award of certificates that are identical or equivalent to those that they have already obtained in the same study options.

(b) Organisation

The alternance education and training centres [*CEFA — Centres d'education et de formation en alternance/Centrum voor deeltijds onderwijs* (*CDO*) in Flemish and *Teilzeitunterrichtszenter* in German], formerly called *CEISPs* (socio-occupational integration and education centres) or *CEHRs* (part-time education centres), give courses and are responsible for organising and managing *EHR*. They may include several full-time secondary education establishments offering at least one vocational education section. One of these establishments then becomes the centre's head office. In total, there are 48 recognised centres in the Flemish community, 40 in the French community and two in the German-speaking community.

These centres organise:

— student reception and supervision,

— student monitoring to promote their socio-occupational integration,

— all the vocational training that is felt to be necessary.

Teaching may take place outside the opening hours of full-time schools. Evening or weekend classes are allowed.

(c) Content of education and training

Part-time education covers both general education, including social and personal education, and preparation for the practice of an occupation. It takes the form of 600 periods of 50 minutes per annum, spread over at least 20 weeks. General education is compulsory for young people in compulsory education. For those who have completed compulsory education, the centres may organise classes only preparing for the practice of an occupation. Practical training takes place for students in part-time compulsory education, under a socio-occupational integration agreement (work experience) or in a job related to their training.

In the French community, vocational training must be in one of the 10 following sectors: agriculture, applied arts, construction, economics, clothing, hotels, catering, industry, applied sciences and personal services.

The training provided varies from one centre to another and from one year to the next, depending on demand. In practice, it is necessary to contact the *CEFA* to find out what training schemes are being organised. Classes may be decentralised throughout the various establishments making up the *CEFA* and attended with students in full-time education. Some classes may be attended in social advancement education. Others are specific to the *CEFA*.

(d) Certification

At the end of each year of *EHR*, students receive a certificate showing the dates on which their attendance began and ended, as well as the skills acquired. An attendance certificate is issued to students leaving the *CEFA/CDO* during the academic year.

The fourth-year qualification certificate (CQ4) has been replaced by an intermediate competence certificate (corresponding to the certificate obtained in full-time education or specific to part-time secondary education). It is awarded, by the class council or by a board including people from outside the school, to students who have actually and assiduously attended, for at least two academic years, either part-time vocational lower secondary education courses in the same study option or the courses of the third year of full-time secondary education and the courses of one year of part-time vocational lower secondary education in the same study option. The management of the *CEFA/CDO* may authorise the award of an intermediate competence certificate to a student who has changed study option when this change has not prevented the student from acquiring a sufficient level of competence.

Students who have actually and assiduously attended education in a *CEFA/CDO* may obtain a qualification certificate corresponding to the certificate issued in full-time education: CQ6, with the exception of the 'domestic help', 'health' and 'nursery nurse' options. Entry into the qualification examinations organised during the sixth year of education is authorised only for students who have actually and assiduously attended, for at least two academic years, either the courses of part-time vocational upper secondary education or the courses of the fifth year of full-time secondary education and the courses of one year of part-time vocational upper secondary education.

It is also possible for a certificate of reintegration into ordinary or special full-time education to be awarded to students who, having attended the *CEFA/CDO* for at least one academic year, are felt to be able to continue their education normally in the fourth or fifth year of vocational education, subject to the favourable opinion of the admissions board of the full-time establishment.

(e) Social and financial assistance

Students receive social assistance. It is intended to:

— help students to locate work experience periods, contracts and agreements;

— monitor the outcomes, which in particular involves checks at alternance training sites to ensure that students are attending regularly and that the work experience, contracts or agreements are in keeping with the training that the student is receiving;

— forge and develop contacts with local and regional socioeconomic circles and professional associations;

— take any steps likely to promote the student's social and cultural development.

For students in part-time compulsory education who are not attending work experience or are not under a contract, social assistance may also involve complementary activities preparing for socio-occupational integration, in particular during their first six months in the *CEFA*.

Young people leaving *EHR* are entitled to transitional or waiting benefits provided that they can produce either a certificate of two years' regular *EHR* attendance or proof of success in the qualification examination.

(f) Trends in the number of students in part-time education

When it was introduced in 1984, there were slightly under 500 students in part-time education. During the following 10 years there was a genuine boom in numbers with over 8 000 students registered in 1993. Since then, its success among young people has never been in doubt as numbers have continued to grow regularly (see Table 19). The German-speaking community is, as can be seen, an exception, although it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusion about the general reasons for this drop in numbers because the small number of German-speaking students tends to amplify the effect of any variation, and because the number of years for which statistics for the German-speaking community are available is not sufficient to reflect a general trend.

Table 19: Trend in the number of students in part-time education, 1992/93 to 1999/2000

Academic year	Flemish community	French community	German-speaking community (*)
1992/93	4 786	3 593	n.a.
1993/94	4 784	3 952	n.a.
1994/95	5 057	4 204	n.a.
1995/96	5 245	4 558	n.a.
1996/97	5 349	4 539	41
1997/98	5 701	5 028	38
1998/99	5 672	5 125	43
1999/2000	5 725	5 415	33

(*) Figures available from 1996 only.

n.a. = not available.

SOURCES: MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION OF THE COMMUNITIES (FLEMISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN-SPEAKING).

3.2.3.2. The industrial apprenticeship contract

Another way of completing part-time compulsory education is for young people to sign an industrial apprenticeship contract (*Contrat d'apprentissage industriel — CAI*), also called apprenticeship contract for occupations practised by employees. This formula is available from the age of 15 (if the first two years of secondary education have been attended) or in all cases for young people aged 16.

This type of apprenticeship was regulated by the law of 19 July 1983 and was applicable only in enterprises with 50 or more workers. This law has been followed by a number of Royal Decrees setting out implementing methods or introducing amendments. For instance, from 1987, the industrial apprenticeship contract also became applicable to white-collar workers; from 1992, the contract could also be concluded in enterprises with less than 50 workers. It is particularly targeted on young people aged between 16 and 21 who have not done well within the educational system and are therefore very under-qualified.

Objectives and organisation of the CAI

Young people learn an occupation normally practised by an employee. Apprenticeship makes it possible for the apprentice to acquire:

— skills in the chosen occupation;

— theoretical vocational knowledge;

— general knowledge in the economic and social fields.

Theoretical training is in most cases given in the alternance training centres (*CEFA/CDO/ Teilzeitunterrichtszenter*) with 15 hours of classes spread over two days per week.

Practical training is given by an approved employer. To be approved, the employer must satisfy the following main conditions:

— be aged at least 25,

— have at least seven years of practical experience in the occupation concerned.

An average of 21 hours of training per week is given in the enterprise. The minimum period of the contract is six months and apprenticeship may take place successively in a number of enterprises.

The content of apprenticeship is drawn up on the basis of proposals from the joint apprenticeship committees (national bodies made up of an equal number of representatives of employers and workers and members representing the Ministries of Education) set up by the joint committees. These joint committees are composed of members appointed by the employers' and trade union federations. They negotiate agreements applicable to the economy as a whole, to a particular industry or to a particular type of worker.

A further task of the joint apprenticeship committees is to approve applicant employers submitting applications. They also determine the length of the contract and the way in which the monthly payment that the employer makes to the apprentice is to be calculated.

The performance of the apprenticeship contract and the training given is supervised, at enterprise level, by the works council and, within an industry, by the joint apprenticeship committees. If, when training comes to an end, it has been organised according to the rules, the employer awards the apprentice a certificate stating the length of training and its content.

Status of apprentices

Young apprentices in industry have employee status. They receive pay which corresponds to a percentage of the wage of a worker aged 21. The level depends on the age of the young person and the stage that they have reached in their training. The wage percentages used for the payment of apprentices in the metalworking and construction sectors on 1 February 1994, broken down by age, are indicated in Table 20.

Table 20: Pay of apprentices as a percentage of the wage of a worker aged 21, 1994 (in %)

	Age 15/16	Age 17	Age 18
(a) Metalworking sectors			
	65	77	90
(b) Construction trades			
Percentage on signature of the contract	55	60	65
After 6 months	60	65	70
After 12 months	65	70	75
After 18 months	70	75	80
After 24 months	75	80	85

The main sectors in which apprenticeship is available are:

— metal manufacturing,
— textiles and hosiery,
— chemicals,
— the foodstuffs industry,
— pulp, paper and board production,
— furnishings and the wood processing industry,
— construction,
— non-ferrous metals,
— the wood industry,
— garages and allied trades,
— the hotel industry,
— metal recycling,
— electricity,
— transport,
— clothing,
— laundry,
— leather-making,
— the diamond industry.

This list was drawn up in September 1998 by the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour. It is constantly changing.

Advantages for the enterprise

In the French community the enterprise receives an 'apprenticeship allowance' for each contract signed, calculated according to a percentage of the minimum wage for the industry and limited to the hours spent in the enterprise. The enterprise also benefits from a sectoral grant of BEF 120 000 (EUR 1 = BEF 40.34) per annum and per apprentice and full exemption from employer's social security contributions (except for the holiday allowance).

3.2.3.3. Apprenticeship for the middle classes

(a) Introduction

The training organised by the middle classes (see Annex 4) is intended to help young people to learn a 'self-employed' occupation. This type of training existed well before the introduction of compulsory part-time education. In 1959, legislation regulated training in the sector of the middle classes. In 1983, the legislator recognised this training as being in keeping with the requirements of part-time compulsory education, within the framework of the extension of compulsory education. This type of apprenticeship is used in the country's three communities. In the French community, over 200 training schemes are organised. In the Flemish community, over 300 training schemes are available.

The institutions responsible for training in this sector are semi-regional public interest bodies:

— in the Flemish community, the *Vlaams Instituut voor het Zelfstandig Ondernemen — VIZO* (Flemish Institute for Small Business),

— in the French community, the *Institut de la formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises — IFPME* (Institute for Continuing Training for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise) and

— the *Institut für Aus – und – Weiterbildung im Mittelstand — IAWM* (Institute for Further and Continuing Training) in the German-speaking community.

There are 22 training centres in the Flemish community and 14 in the French community (12 in the Walloon region and two in Brussels).

(b) Objectives

The explicit objective of *VIZO*, *IFPME* and *IAWM* is to train self-employed people so that they may:

— practise a craft profession,

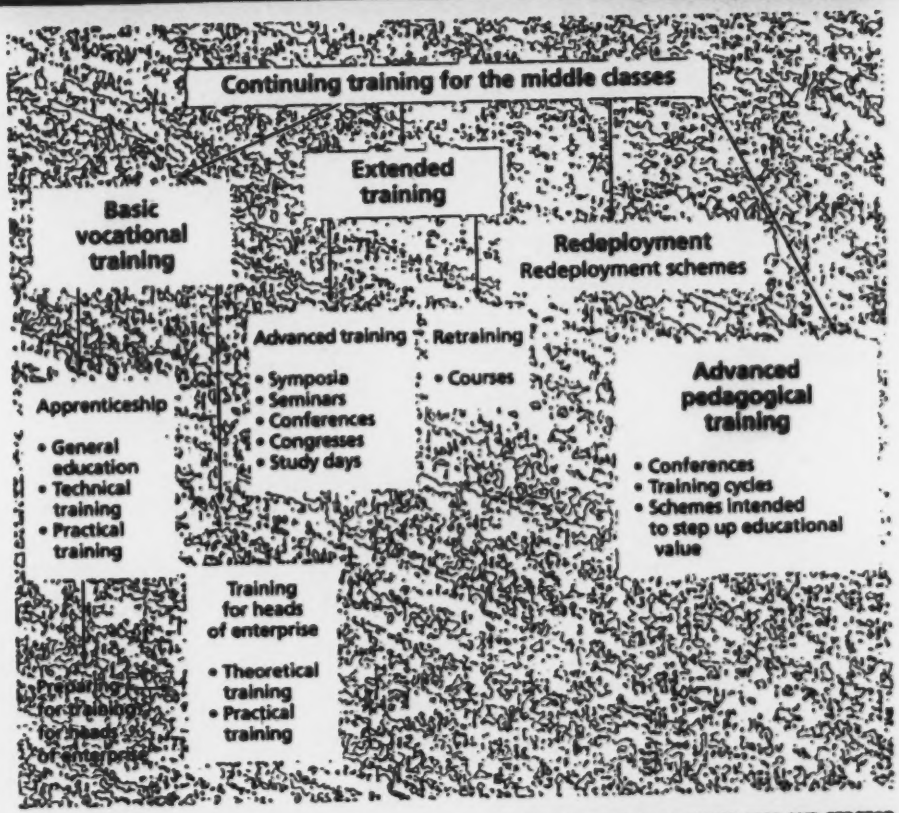
— succeed in a commercial business, and

— manage a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME).

The training schemes offered by these bodies are in areas different from, but complementing, the schemes offered by the *CEFA/CDO* or the industrial apprenticeship contract. The latter was designed to provide large enterprises with an alternative comparable to training for the middle classes.

We shall look here only at initial vocational training and apprenticeship, as the other parts of the provision come under the heading of continuing vocational training (see Section 3.3.5).

Figure 16 — Training for the middle classes



SOURCE: FICHES INFOR-JEUNES 1998 AND CEDEFOP

(c) Organisation of training

The apprenticeship contract

The apprenticeship contract is the key element of this training option, in contrast to the part-time education provided by the *CEFA/CDO* (see Section 3.2.3.1). This contract is drawn up between a head of enterprise, who undertakes to give or to arrange to give an apprentice general or technical training in preparation for training as a head of enterprise, and an apprentice, who undertakes to learn about theoretical subjects and the expertise needed for the practice of the occupation. It is concluded under the 'moral and social' patronage of a 'supervisor' in the case of *IFPME* and an 'apprenticeship secretary' in the case of *VIZO*. It is the supervisor or secretary who puts the file together and submits it for approval by the *IFPME* or *VIZO*. This file must include the overall training plan which is geared to apprentices' prior training, their career plan, their education and their age. It must also give details of the length of the contract and specify the courses to be attended.

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A contract of this type lasts three years. It may be reduced to two years for young people with technical or vocational education certificates and for apprentices who fail in the first or second year.

Conditions for approval of training

The apprentice:

— must be 15 or over and have attended at least the first two years of secondary education whether successfully or not. In this case an entry examination is organised by *IFPME* or *VIZO*; or

— must be 15 or over and have successfully completed the first two years of vocational education; or

— must be 16 or over, without having satisfied the educational conditions mentioned above and having successfully passed the examination organised by *IFPME* or *VIZO*;

— must be declared physically suitable to carry out the occupation. The apprentice must therefore attend a medical examination;

— may also be invited to attend an examination at a psychological, medical and social (PMS) centre within six months of conclusion of the contract.

For certain trades, the minimum age of entry into apprenticeship is 16.

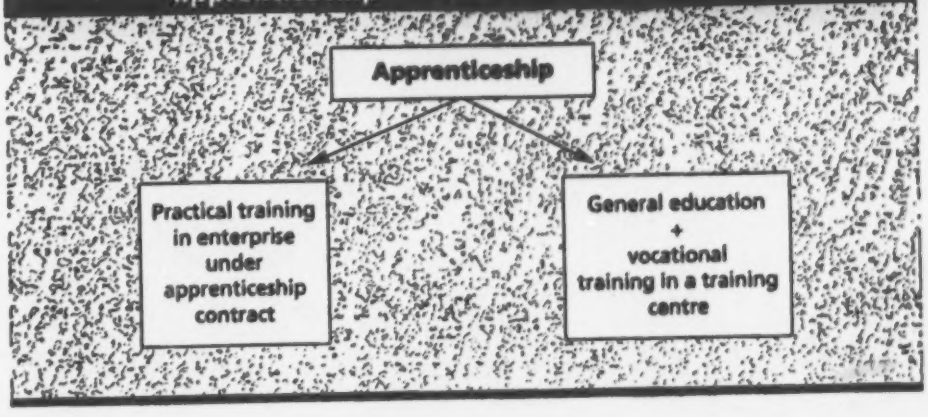
Heads of enterprise must:

— be of irreproachable conduct;

— be 25 or over (23 if they possess a head of enterprise diploma) and furnish proof of at least five years of training or work in the occupation.

The enterprise must be organised and equipped in such a way as to ensure that the apprentice receives practical training that is in keeping with the training programme.

Figure 17 — Content of vocational training during apprenticeship


Apprenticeship
Practical training in enterprise under apprenticeship contract
General education + vocational training in a training centre

The apprenticeship includes:

— general education courses, which cover the subjects that people need to study to acquire knowledge, expertise and attitudes likely to promote their education and development and are spread over three years (French, mathematics, commerce, law, current affairs and possibly language courses);

— vocational training courses, which cover the subjects required to provide trainees with a theoretical grounding in their chosen occupation and supplement practical training. They therefore vary depending on the training chosen. They are generally based, however, on knowledge of raw materials or commercial products, tools and enterprise equipment, technological approaches, health and safety issues, etc.

Courses are given on average for one day or one and a half days per week. For the remainder of the time, apprentices are trained in the enterprise with which they have a contract.

Table 21: Structure of apprenticeship training

(a) In the French community

	Year 1	Years 2 and 3
General education	180 hours	128 hours
Vocational training	180 hours	128 hours
Total	360 hours	256 hours

(b) In the Flemish community

	Years 1, 2 and 3
General education	120 hours per year
Vocational training	120 hours per year
Total	240 hours per year

NB: Trainees aged 15 must attend a further 120 hours of general education

SOURCES: FICHES INFOR-JEUNES 1998 AND VIZO.

An important pedagogical reform of apprenticeship was introduced in the French community in 1997.

In outline this included:

— more modular general education programmes and changes to assessment procedures,

— improved psycho-educational assistance for young people,

— the introduction of new remedial modules intended to fill gaps from the point of view of general knowledge.

(d) Assessment of training

This takes place in two different but complementary ways:

(1) apprentices are subject to continuous assessment throughout the year. This accounts for 50 % of marks;

(2) at the end of the third year, apprentices sit an examination covering their general education, vocational training and practical abilities.

In the case of *VIZO*, apprentices take a transitional examination covering both general education and vocational training courses at the end of year 1 and year 2. Apprentices then receive an apprenticeship certificate awarded by *VIZO* in the Flemish community and validated by a board made up of representatives of the Ministry of Education and *IFPME* (Order of the Executive of the French Community of 28 December 1992) in the French community.

(e) Status and pay of apprentices

Apprentices are not employees. Their apprenticeship contract does not give them legal status equivalent to that of an employee or worker. They are considered more as students.

Table 22: Monthly apprenticeship allowance 1998 and 1999 (in BEF)

	French community(*)	Flemish community	
	1998	1998	1999
Apprenticeship year 1	5 014	9 284	9 368
Apprenticeship year 2	7 982	12 379	12 491
Apprenticeship year 3	9 495	15 473	15 600

EUR 1 = BEF 40.3399.
(*) Figures not available for 1999.

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(f) Number of apprentices

Figures for those completing *IFPME* and *VIZO* apprenticeship make it possible to trace trends in numbers over the period 1985 to 1998.

Table 23: Trends in numbers trained under apprenticeship for the middle classes, 1985 to 1998

End of apprenticeship examinations

(a) In the French community

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number registered	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3 613	3 495	3 496	2 873	2 781	2 611	2 623	2 751
Number attending	3606	3552	3104	3 240	3 191	3 057	2 628	2 503	2 391	2 401	2 488
Ratio attending/registered	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	90 %	91 %	87 %	91 %	90 %	92 %	92 %	90 %
Number of passes											
• Total	2 790	2 766	2 376	2 425	2 427	2 342	2 058	1 999	1 802	1 872	1 863
— Men	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 524	1 576	1 574	1 392	1 380	1 228	1 302	1 304
— Women	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	901	851	768	666	619	574	570	559
Ratio of passes/attendances	77 %	78 %	77 %	75 %	76 %	77 %	78 %	80 %	75 %	78 %	75 %

(b) In the Flemish community

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Number attending	4 336	3818	3 583	3 297	3 172	3 351	3 309	3 263	3 202
Number of passes									
• Total	3 755	3 299	3 076	2 849	2 766	2 897	2 898	2 843	2 798
— Men	2 388	2 258	2 013	1 860	1 792	1 962	1 951	1 901	1 983
— Women	1 367	1 041	1 063	989	974	935	947	942	815
Ratio of passes/attendances	87 %	88 %	86 %	86 %	87 %	86 %	88 %	87 %	87 %

n.a. = not available.

SOURCES: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1998 AND VIZO.

The number of apprentices is falling slightly from year to year. The number of women in apprenticeship is much smaller than the number of men.

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3.2.3.4. The employment/training agreement

(a) Introduction

Royal Decree 495 of 31 December 1986, amended several times thereafter (1987, 1988, 1991), introduced the employment/training agreement. This measure is intended to promote the integration into working life of young people aged between 18 and 25, who have few or no qualifications, through an alternance training system. Employers are exempt from some employers' social security contributions for the whole period of the agreement. This agreement has now been extended to young people in part-time compulsory education.

(b) Special features of the employment/training agreement

One of the particular features of this alternance training is that it comprises two strands:

(1) a permanent part-time contract of employment, with a commitment to half-time working at least,

(2) a training strand which must have a direct or indirect link with the occupation in question.

This training may be given:

— by the *CEFA/CDO/Teilzeitunterrichtszenter;*

— within social advancement education (*enseignement de promotion sociale — EPS/Onderwijs voor sociale promotie — OSP*);

— in the training schemes offered by *IFPME* and *VIZO;*

— in full-time university or higher education of the long type;

— by approved sectors;

— by *FOREM* in the Walloon region (regional public service organisation responsible for training and employment);

— by the *Vlaams Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding* (*VDAB*) in the Flemish region and for Flemings in the Brussels region;

— by the *Institut bruxellois francophone pour la formation professionnelle* (*IBFFP* – French-speaking Brussels Institute for Vocational Training — known in short as 'Brussels-Training') for French speakers in the Brussels region.

This training covers a period of one to three years. The employer may be any industrial, commercial or agricultural enterprise or any professional practitioner or self-employed person without employees. Employees have the status of part-time workers. They may therefore receive pay corresponding to the number of hours worked.

Table 24: Employment/training agreements by year and by region, 1990 to 1998

Year ending	Flanders	Wallonia	Brussels	Belgium
31 July 1990	452	227	83	762
31 July 1991	359	262	103	724
31 July 1992	497	243	116	856
31 July 1993	626	474	215	1 315
30 June 1994	781	655	235	1 671
30 June 1995	845	910	183	1 938
30 June 1996	941	838	180	1 959
30 June 1997	974	692	294	1 960
30 June 1998	1 109	938	453	2 500

SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR.

3.2.3.5. The socio-occupational integration agreement

This is an agreement entered into by a *CEFA/CDO*, an enterprise and a student authorised by his or her parents. Under this agreement there is alternance between training in enterprise and theoretical training given by a *CEFA/CDO*.

It is targeted at:

(1) students in part-time compulsory education,

(2) students regularly registered in a *CEFA/CDO* prior to 31 December of the year in which they reach the age of 18.

The agreement lasts for 12 months, but may be renewed in order to enable students to complete their training cycle (two or three years). Theoretical training and practical training may not exceed 38 hours per week.

The enterprise must undertake to:

— allocate students occupational tasks likely to help them to obtain their vocational qualification, in accordance with the individual training programme attached to the agreement;

— appoint a tutor to supervise students in cooperation with the educational institution;

— send students for a medical examination, carried out by a company doctor, prior to recruitment.

Students receive pay from the enterprise equivalent to 40 % of the guaranteed minimum wage in year 1, 50 % in year 2 and 58 % in year 3, unless the joint commission decides to align pay with the minimum wage in the industry.

This type of alternance training only came into force in the French community on 1 September 1998 and it is therefore impossible to provide any figures.

3.2.4. Higher education (non-university) (*)

This education comprises two types of training:

— short higher education: three years of education after obtaining the upper secondary education certificate (*Certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur — CESS*),

— university-level long higher education: four or five years after obtaining the *CESS*.

3.2.4.1. General principles of high schools

The decrees of 13 July 1994 in the Flemish community and 5 August 1995 in the French community reorganised the higher education offered by high schools *(hautes écoles/ hogescholen)*.

In the 1999/2000 academic year, there were 30 high schools in the French community with 59 982 students and 29 in the Flemish community with 98 536 students. Men and women account for almost equal numbers of the school population, although there are slightly larger numbers of women:

— French community: 33 976 men and 43 290 women,

— Flemish community: 45 747 men and 52 789 women.

Figures for the breakdown between men and women in the German-speaking community are not available. However, the trend has been substantially the same, retaining the same proportions, with an increase from 68 students in the high schools in 1989 to 180 in 1995 and 159 in 1999–2000.

High schools are formed by a number of establishments grouping together voluntarily in accordance with an educational, social and cultural plan adopted in agreement with the organising authorities, teachers and students.

This educational, social and cultural plan, which is a statement of the high school's identity, sets out the methods and resources to be used to:

— ensure high quality education,

— combat failure at school,

— promote participation by all the actors in the management of the high school,

— work together with the economic, social and cultural environment.

As far as possible, high schools must offer a range of training schemes including both short higher education and university-level long higher education as well as several areas of study: agricultural, economic, paramedical, educational, social, technical and translation-interpreting.

(*) In contrast to conventional usage in other French-speaking countries the term *enseignement supérieur* (higher education) is used in Belgium to designate post-secondary non-university education.

3.2.4.2. General objectives of high schools

Each high school must:

— prepare students for their role as responsible citizens within society,

— promote the development and fulfilment of students by helping them to become independent and responsible,

— train students so that they can play an active role in the socioeconomic world.

In order to achieve these objectives, high schools are required to give their students high-quality initial training in both theory and practice, to produce support material, to carry out applied research, to implement continuing training schemes, to cooperate with the socioeconomic world and to cooperate internationally.

The educational objectives put forward to justify the reform, which included better opportunities to switch sections in the case of changes of study and the removal of divisions between the various types of training, were not the only objectives. The main objective was of a budgetary nature. In practice, high schools receive a 'closed package' calculated largely pro rata to the number of students registered in each high school. The high school is then entirely free to allocate the sums received from the public authorities (the communities) for the general organisation of education (recruitment of personnel) and the overall operation of the institutions making up each high school.

3.2.4.3. Management organs of high schools

Various consultative and decision-making bodies were established when high schools were introduced. Representatives from the various staff grades as well as students nominated by the high school's student council and elected by their peers, representatives from socioeconomic circles chosen in relation to the types of study offered by the high school as well as representatives of trade unions and employers' organisations sit on the various bodies.

3.2.4.4. High school evaluation

This was the first occasion in which the notion of an official evaluation procedure was introduced in Belgium. Under the Flemish and French community decrees, an annual report covering compliance with the educational plan has to be submitted to the respective government as well as a three-yearly report on the quality of teaching activities and the other tasks of high schools. These reports are examined by the departments of the governments of the French and Flemish communities.

3.2.5. University education

The task of universities is to safeguard, disseminate and advance science and knowledge. Research and education are therefore closely linked, whereas the purpose of the training given in high schools is to pass on scientific knowledge and its applications in the various occupations for which they educate students.

3.2.5.1. Number of university registrations

Table 25: University population in the 1998/99 academic year

	Total	Men	Women
Flemish community	69 173	34 275	34 898
French community	60 224	30 475	29 749
Total	129 397	64 750	64 647

SOURCES: DATA FROM THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION OF THE FLEMISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES.

3.2.5.2. Location of Belgian universities

- The Flemish community is responsible for: the University of Ghent, the Catholic University of Louvain, the Free University of Brussels (VUB), the three universities of Antwerp, the Limburg transnational university at Diepenbeek and the Catholic University of Brussels.

- The French community is responsible for: the Catholic University of Louvain-La-Neuve, the Free University of Brussels (ULB), the University of Liège, the University of Mons-Hainaut, the Notre-Dame de la Paix University Faculties at Namur, the University Faculty of Agronomic Sciences at Gembloux, the Polytechnic Faculty of Mons, the Catholic University Faculties of Mons, the Saint-Louis University Faculties in Brussels and the University Faculty of Protestant Theology in Brussels.

3.2.5.3. Structure of university education

University education is divided into study cycles. Each university study cycle ends with the award of a certificate: the *candidaturelkandidaat* after initial study of two or three years and the *licencellicentiaat* after a further two or three years of specialised study and, in most subjects, the submission of a dissertation. The initial cycle is longer for medicine (three years rather than two), while the second cycle may be longer (three or four years) for some subjects.

Up to now, people wishing to teach in general upper secondary education and short higher education need to obtain an additional certificate, the *agrégé de l'enseignement secondaire supérieure*. This certificate may be obtained either while completing a *licence* or after a *licence* has been obtained.

Belgium also has a number of *licences* (degrees) which are open to short and long higher education students. These degrees (from two to three years) may be obtained at university provided that they follow on from a single *candidature* (one year) or success in an entrance examination which gives direct access to these degrees.

The Order of the Government of the French Community of 15 March 1999 lays down possible bridges between high schools and universities and vice versa. These provisions came into force in September 1999.

In order to obtain a doctorate, the examination includes the presentation and public defence of a doctoral thesis which must provide new and original thinking in the field that has been explored. Only students considered suitable by the scientific research faculty may undertake to present a doctoral thesis.

3.2.6. Number of students registered in higher education (university and non-university)

Table 26: Percentage of the Belgian population, aged 15–25, in higher education, 1989, 1990 and 1995

Year	Population aged 15–25	Students	%
1989	1 411 400	235 238	16.7
1990	1 378 100	242 995	17.6
1995	1 283 100	352 600	27.5

SOURCE: STATISTICAL YEARBOOK 1996, BELGIUM.

This analysis shows that participation in higher education is very high in Belgium and has continued to grow since 1989.

3.3. Continuing vocational training

3.3.1. Introduction

There is no overview of continuing vocational training in Belgium at present. The problems raised by dropping out from school and the employment crisis have helped to develop training circuits parallel to traditional streams. We are therefore faced with a very complex field of training operators. Operators are completely free to pursue whatever objectives they want in their training schemes and these schemes are also financed by a whole range of partnerships and are therefore subject to very different tensions.

In this context, no comparison or analysis was possible. It is for this reason that we shall look here only at the conventional training suppliers, i.e.:

— social advancement education (*enseignement de promotion sociale/Onderwijs sociale promotie – EPS/OSP*) (Section 3.3.2);

— the vocational training schemes run by *FOREM, VDAB* and Brussels-Training (*IBFFP*) (Section 3.3.4);

— training schemes for the middle classes (*) (*IFPME/VIZO*) (Section 3.3.5).

This chapter also includes a brief review of other training systems and initiatives for certain groups of adults:

— agricultural training (Section 3.3.6.1),

— training for the disabled (Section 3.3.6.2),

— distance learning (Section 3.3.6.3),

— in-company training (Section 3.3.6.4).

3.3.2. Social advancement education

3.3.2.1.

Historically, evening and weekend courses for adults, now known as social advancement education, are as old as education itself. Until 1970, evening and weekend courses were also called 'part-time education' or education lasting no more than 28 course hours per week. In 1970, this kind of education was renamed and became social advancement education (*EPS/OSP*)

The legislator's aim in giving this kind of education a new name in 1970 was to accommodate people who, for all sorts of reasons, were unable to find appropriate solutions in full-time education and people who, having completed education, wished to acquire — in working life — a specialisation or new training within the shortest possible timescale.

3.3.2.2.

This change of name and the introduction of short training courses were not accompanied by the introduction of new structures for adult education — the 1957

(*) See Annex 4.

legal basis and the 1966 organisational structure in practice remained unchanged. Only objectives, and not content, were reformed in 1970. As a result, social advancement education continues to be covered by legislation on full-time education. As far as its structure and organisation are concerned, adult education is still a replica of full-time education.

3.3.2.3.

Education of this type may be organised by the three education networks (see Section 2.2.1). Social advancement education establishments may organise lower and upper secondary education sections and short or long higher education sections. Courses are given in school buildings belonging to the three networks.

3.3.2.4.

In 1970, the structure of language teaching was reorganised. The language sections were divided into three levels:

— elementary knowledge (from one to two years),

— practical knowledge (from two to three years),

— advanced knowledge (from two to three years).

Fast-track training was also introduced (same number of course hours spread over a shorter period).

3.3.2.5.

Following the adoption of the law on paid educational leave *(congé-éducation payé/betaald educatief verlof – CEP/BEV)* on 22 January 1985 and in view of growing numbers of unemployed people free during the day, this education is increasingly run during the late afternoon or during the day (see Section 3.3.3).

3.3.2.6.

As this education is nowadays part and parcel of the trend towards lifelong education and training, its objectives have changed somewhat over the last 10 years. It is intended largely to:

— help people to fulfil themselves by promoting their improved vocational, social, cultural and school integration;

— meet the needs and demand for training from enterprises, authorities, education and in general socioeconomic and cultural circles.

At present, over 650 different training schemes are available.

3.3.2.7.

In the French community, the decree of 16 April 1991 organising this education introduced major changes.

Firstly, the certificates obtained in social advancement and full-time education were placed on a par. Existing training schemes were replaced by sections made up of several credit units (modules) that could be used to obtain a certificate. Each module

forms a coherent whole combining knowledge and vocational skills. A module generally lasts six months and may be organised at any time of the year.

In the French and Flemish communities, this modular education was introduced experimentally in 1979 and placed on a general footing in 1983. The decree of 16 April 1991 merely legally ratified what already existed. In the Flemish community, a wide-ranging reform of social advancement education is being considered so that this education can be included within the general framework of lifelong education.

3.3.2.8.

The teaching methods used in *EPS/OPS* draw on students' occupational experience and as far as possible relate to concrete situations to which theoretical notions are attached.

3.3.2.9.

The target group for *EPS/OPS* is very wide-ranging. It includes:

— people in work who wish to obtain advanced training, acquire a specialisation or take part in retraining or other training for the purposes of a career change;

— people with or without occupational qualifications who want to acquire additional knowledge or expertise for the purposes of self-fulfilment;

— people wishing to acquire the entry requirements for subsequent training;

— unemployed people wishing to keep up their individual or occupational skills.

This explains the very large number of people registered in both the French and the Flemish communities. In the 1995/96 academic year, 128 161 people were enrolled in the French community and in 1996/97, 146 757 in the Flemish community.

3.3.2.10.

The Council of Studies, made up of teachers who will be or have been responsible for teaching, decides:

— on the admission of students on the basis of skills acquired in other training schemes or in the working world;

— on the ways in which these skills can be built on;

— on the award of certificates.

On the latter point, if a certificate is to be awarded for a qualification training unit, members from outside the teaching body who are experienced in the field in question are brought into the Council of Studies.

EPS/OPS can award certificates for education corresponding to those awarded by full-time education. For instance, in the French community, the qualification of 'Graduate librarian-documentalist' may be obtained after four years. In full-time short higher education, this is a three-year course.

3.3.2.11.

The Higher Council, containing representatives of networks, of management personnel and teaching staff and of students, trade union and employers' organisations and socioeconomic circles, develops *EPS/OPS* and determines training levels in keeping with occupational profiles.

3.3.2.12.

The Concertation Committee, also made up of representatives of the networks, a representative of the administration, a representative of the inspectorate and representatives of trade union and employers' organisations, draws up teaching dossiers and regulates the *EPS/OPS* training supply.

3.3.3. Paid educational leave

3.3.3.1.

Before discussing other training schemes, it is useful to take a closer look at the concept of 'paid educational leave'. This system is based on the amending law of 22 January 1985 which replaced the system of credit hours.

3.3.3.2.

The aim of the paid educational leave system is the social advancement of those working full time in the private sector. It is intended to ease the burdens on, and make it less tiring for, workers who, in addition to their work, are attending various vocational training and/or general education schemes and preparing for examinations during their leisure time. A further aim of this system is to correct social inequalities in respect of workers who have not been able to attend education and to promote the integration of foreign workers.

3.3.3.3.

Paid educational leave means that workers can be absent from work while retaining their normal pay. The vocational training schemes that workers attend must be linked to their work or occupational prospects.

Since 1993, the length of paid educational leave has been limited, per academic year, to 180 or 120 hours for vocational training, 80 or 120 hours for general education and 180 hours in cases where workers are attending vocational training and general education during the same year.

For instance, workers may undertake:

— courses organised within the framework of social advancement education;

— short higher education full-time courses given in higher education establishments;

— training for the middle classes, i.e.:
  - training for heads of enterprise,
  - advanced training,
  - continuing training and retraining;

— long university-level full-time courses given in higher education establishments;

— training for which the regulations on the vocational qualification of people working in agriculture make provision;

— preparation for, and the sitting of, examinations.

Employers are under an obligation to grant paid educational leave and to pay workers their normal wage as if they were at work. They do not, however, bear any costs as pay and the related contributions are reimbursed by the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour.

The State allocates an overall subsidy to the fund for the reimbursement of employers. The employers' share is collected through a social security contribution paid to the social security collection authorities.

3.3.3.4.

On 31 July 1998, the Belgian Official Journal published the Royal Decree of 20 July 1998 laying down rules and special application methods for paid educational leave for the employees of SMEs (employing no more than an annual average of 50 workers).

In concrete terms, SME educational leave is targeted on workers who, per quarter, work at least 51 % of the working hours or days of a full-time worker set out in the collective labour agreement applicable to them. Employees receive an allowance, borne by the employer, for the training schemes that they attend, which must be agreed by the employer, outside of normal working hours up to a maximum of 100 training hours. This allowance is equivalent to the worker's normal wage, limited to the amount of pay as set on the basis of Article 16 of the Royal Decree of 23 July 1985 [this amount was BEF 68 000 (EUR 1 686) from 1 September 1998 and is index linked on 30 September of each year]. It is important to note, moreover, that no account is taken of this allowance when calculating the maximum margin by which wages can rise.

Half the allowances and related social security contributions may be reimbursed to employers by the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour.

Paid educational leave is available for workers employed in collective working time reduction schemes, workers working 80 % of minimum time and full-time workers on variable hours.

3.3.3.5.

Table 27 gives information on:

— the number of people taking paid educational leave, by gender, status and academic year,

— the age-groups concerned,

— the types of training schemes attended.

Table 27: People taking paid educational leave

(a) By gender, status and academic year

	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
Manual workers					
Men	26 429	24 934	20 661	22 121	22 421
Women	4 428	4 196	2 875	3 025	2 728
Total	30 857	29 130	23 536	25 146	25 149
White-collar workers					
Men	11 106	10 580	9 028	8 088	7 632
Women	8 808	8 461	6 530	5 499	5 744
Total	19 914	19 041	15 558	13 587	13 376
Overall total	50 771	48 171	39 094	38 733	38 525

(b) By age-group — academic year 1994/95 (as %)

Under 20	0.5
From 21 to 30	36.0
From 31 to 40	37.0
From 41 to 50	22.0
50 +	4.5
Total	100.0

(c) By type of training attended — academic year 1994/95 (as %)

Social advancement education	29.6
Continuing training for the middle classes	6.2
Sectoral training schemes	18.6
Examining commissions	5.3
General education	22.7
Language training	15.4
Other	2.3
Total	100.0

SOURCE: FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR.

It can be seen from Table 27 that:

— the number of people taking paid educational leave is continuing to fall. This might well be explained by measures taken to combat certain abuses such as training schemes which had no occupational objectives;

— the age of beneficiaries is in particular between 20 and 40;

— women are under-represented amongst users of this system (26 % in 1992/93, 24 % in 1994/95, 22 % in 1995/96). In practice, paid educational leave cannot be granted for part- time workers except in the SME sector, and it is women who occupy most such jobs (see Table 5).

3.3.4. Adult vocational training and guidance organised by para-regional bodies

When Belgium was a unitary State in the 1960s, all these tasks were carried out by the National Employment Office (*ONEM/RVA*) which was answerable to the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour.

This body was responsible for:

— paying unemployed people (payment of unemployment benefit);

— managing job vacancies submitted by enterprises and/or placing jobseekers (including temporary work);

— vocational training for jobseekers.

The federalisation of Belgium led to major changes in 1988.

Payment of benefits to unemployed people is still the responsibility of the federal authorities and is administered by *ONEM/RVA*. Table 28 shows how the other powers have been distributed.

Table 28: Distribution of powers over placement and training

Areas	Powers over placement	Powers over training
Flemish region	Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding — VDAB (Flemish Office for Employment and Placement)	VDAB
Flemings in the Brussels region	Brusselse Gewestelijke Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling — BGDA (Brussels Regional Office for Employment)	VDAB
French speakers in the Brussels region	Office régional bruxellois de l'emploi — ORBEM (Brussels Regional Office for Employment)	Institut bruxellois francophone pour la formation professionnelle (IBFFP) or Bruxelles-Formation (Actual powers transferred from the French community to the French Community Commission (COCOF)
Walloon region	Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi — FOREM (Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Placement)	FOREM (Actual powers transferred from the French community to the Walloon region)
German-speaking community(*)	Arbeitsamt der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft (Employment Office of the German-speaking community)	Arbeitsamt der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft (ADG)

(*) Since 1 January 2001, the German-speaking community has had responsibility for employment and vocational training.

SOURCE: FOREM: MISSIONS ET ORGANISATION DU FOREM, 2/2000.

These public interest bodies have the status of para-regional bodies which gives them the management autonomy that they need to be able to act more flexibly. They have legal personality. The regional government monitors them only for supervisory purposes. They are administered by a management board composed jointly of representatives of employers and workers.

FOREM, VDAB, IBFFP and *BGDA* are also responsible for the vocational training of people for employment purposes. In order to ensure that they are in touch with their target groups, they are organised in a decentralised way. This is the role of the 12 regional directorates in the Walloon region and the 13 regional directorates in the Flemish region.

3.3.4.1. Aims and tasks of FOREM and VDAB

The vocational training supplied in these centres is targeted at people aged over 18 who are workers (a low proportion) and in particular jobseekers.

Like *VDAB, FOREM* has a dual task:

— to help people to manage their career plans,
— to help enterprises to manage their human resources.

The priority objective of these two bodies is to make people more employable. The training given must therefore be qualifying.

As a service enterprise, *FOREM*'s objectives are in three major areas.

For individuals:

— consultancy work to help people find jobs by providing them with information on job vacancies,
— vocational training including guidance, retraining or redeployment,
— social and psychological assistance.

For enterprises:

— recruitment and selection of personnel including temporary workers (management of job vacancies, psychological analysis),
— vocational training for current or future personnel including consultancy, retraining or redeployment,
— consultancy on public employment and training aids, including help with formalities.

The founding decree sets out an innovative procedure through which *FOREM*'s tasks are given concrete shape. Under the decree, the management committee and the Walloon and German-speaking governments enter into a contract specifying priorities and the guidelines to be followed. This management contract covers a four-year period and makes it possible to negotiate very concrete objectives, bearing in mind the political vision of the Walloon and German-speaking governments and *FOREM*'s experience in the field.

On 24 July 1997, *VDAB* concluded a management agreement with the Flemish government under which it undertook to:

— provide a basic service ensuring that the various demands of jobseekers and employers are met,

— plan training operations in accordance with well-defined criteria,

— set up paying services, such as T–Intérim and Consult, whose tasks include the recruitment and selection of workers, training and placement.

3.3.4.2. Organisation of FOREM and VDAB

VDAB and *FOREM* are organised in the same way. They have:

— vocational training centres set up and directly managed by themselves,

— centres set up in partnership with enterprises (indirect management),

— approved centres.

Vocational training centres are organised using *VDAB*'s and *FOREM*'s own resources or with assistance from third parties. Where third parties help to organise vocational training centres, costs are split between the contracting parties.

Centres set up in cooperation with enterprises are centres in which *VDAB* and *FOREM* support vocational training schemes in cooperation with enterprises that want to organise collective technical training for their workers. Training must take place systematically in the enterprise in accordance with an approved programme, and must take place outside normal production.

Approved centres are centres that have been set up at the initiative of enterprises or public or private associations. Their qualifications to provide vocational training must be recognised by the respective ministers of the communities, at the proposal of the management committees of *VDAB* and *FOREM* and at the recommendation of the Subregional Committee on Labour and Training (*Comité subrégional de l'emploi et de la formation — CSEF*).

Alongside these collective training schemes, there are also individual training schemes. These are training schemes that *FOREM/VDAB* organise for jobseekers in enterprises or educational institutions, in cooperation with enterprises, for tasks for which no *FOREM/VDAB* training exists. In this case, employers must recruit the trainee immediately after the training for a period equivalent to that training.

To illustrate the above, we shall look in more detail at some training schemes organised by *FOREM*, as well as *VDAB*'s concept of 'training pathway' and its *Spoor 21* scheme.

(a) FOREM

Centres d'accueil, d'orientation et d'initiation socio-professionnelle — CAIOISP (Reception, guidance and socio-occupational induction centres)

Socio-occupational integration plans may be directly managed (the instructors are *FOREM* instructors) or indirectly managed (partnerships). Partners in these centres are largely operators offering training schemes in the areas of socialisation, remedial education, pre-qualification and guidance. The main operators are chiefly the *OISPs* (*Organismes d'insertion socio-professionnelle* — Socio-occupational integration agencies), the *EFTs* (*Entreprises de formation par le travail* — Work training enterprises), *EPS* (social advancement education) and the *CEFA* (alternance education and training centres).

Table 29: Breakdown of the number of directly and indirectly managed training hours, 1995 to 1998

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Direct management	637 386	721 007	612 953	576 428
Indirect management	564 896	1 045 838	1 230 481	1 797 288
Total	**1 202 282**	**1 766 845**	**1 843 434**	**2 373 716**
Proportion of the total for which direct management accounts (as %)	53	41	33	24

SOURCE: *FOREM ANNUAL REPORT, 1998.*

Table 29 shows that indirectly managed hours have grown as a result of the creation of various partnerships and chiefly an increase in the number of *OISPs*. Directly managed hours continue to be more or less constant.

Training schemes in the industrial and service sectors

The training on offer in the industrial sector is grouped into 12 occupational sectors, 46 occupations and 250 modules organised as qualifying streams.

The length of training varies from a few weeks to several months and is full time.

Table 30: Number of enrolments for training in the industrial sector, 1990 to 1995

Year	Number of enrolments
1990	4 863
1991	4 745
1992	4 538
1993	5 386
1994	7 523
1995	8 539

SOURCE: *MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1996.*

In 1995, 4 792 of the 8 539 enrolments for training were in directly managed centres and 3 747 in indirectly managed centres.

There has been a substantial increase in vocational training since the 1960s in the service sector. This training prepares for administrative and commercial tasks and includes modular and integrated training schemes, whose components are foreign languages, secretarial skills, administration, management, office automation and IT. This training includes enterprise simulations whose main aim is to promote good attitudes towards work. The successful formula here is a simulated enterprise in which the people being trained carry out different tasks throughout the various stages of the enterprise's work.

In addition, Article 6 of the Order of the Executive of the French Community of 12 May 1987 makes provision for the creation of training centres in cooperation with enterprises implementing a technical, collective and qualifying training programme. Under this framework, *FOREM* awards lump-sum financial aid for the personnel being trained and for instructors.

(b) VDAB

Table 31: The concept of vocational training 'pathway' (in five stages and seven modules)

Stages	Modules
Stage 1: Assistance with jobseeking	*Module 1:* Service provided by VDAB for jobseekers
Stage 2: Diagnostic stage, after which a training pathway is drawn up with the jobseeker	*Module 2:* This pathway, in which remedial modules often have to be included, is set in motion (stage 3)
Stage 3: Vocational training, with mentoring in a training centre	*Module 3:* Jobseekers are helped to prepare applications for potential jobs
	Module 4: Where necessary, appropriate vocational training is organised
	Module 5: Psychological assistance in order to support jobseekers as they attempt to return to the labour market
Stage 4: Mentoring during on-the-job vocational training	*Module 6:* The content of on-the-job vocational training is demarcated
Phase 5: Obtaining a job	*Module 7:* Training is followed up through mentoring measures for workers who have returned to work

SOURCE: VDAB.

Spoor 21

This is a new *VDAB* service which incorporates all training schemes and gives the clearest possible overview of all the services available for jobseekers in a perpetually changing society.

Within this new service, training schemes are offered in five different areas:

— development of initial competences

— development of vocational competences

— organisation of tailor-made training

— development of autonomous learning

— development of learning centres.

The main aim of *Spoor 21* is to develop human resources via a *VDAB* which wishes to promote greater flexibility. As *Spoor 21* is very recent, this measure has yet to be evaluated.

3.3.4.3. International cooperation

FOREM and *VDAB* both consider that it is crucial to analyse the dynamics of changes taking place abroad: deregulation, development of training and certification systems, new employment and training policies. Both of these para-regional agencies are therefore taking part in the work of the main international organisations: European Union, International Labour Organisation, Unesco, OECD, etc.

International cooperation has also led to various practical projects:

— exchanges of trainers and placement officers with foreign countries,

— secondment of experts (in particular to Africa and eastern Europe),

— reception of foreign delegations,

— training of foreign trainers,

— enrolment of foreign trainees in Belgian training centres.

3.3.4.4. FOREM and VDAB action policies

An OECD report published in 1997 on the public employment service in Belgium highlights several differences between *FOREM* and *VDAB* action policies. *VDAB* seems to make more use of subcontracting (i.e. it works in partnership with private sectoral organisations, in particular in the fields of construction and heavy engineering) than *FOREM*. *VDAB* is therefore able to offer a wider range of guidance opportunities and occupational choices to trainees and to reduce waiting times for work experience periods.

Another difference lies in the fact that, in the Walloon region, *FOREM* is taking active steps to provide help for jobseekers combining long-term unemployment, low levels of education and a lack of qualifications. *FOREM* offers them a 'redynamisation session' in order jointly to work out possible pathways for their resocialisation. The results given by the OECD show that, by the end of this 'session':

— 9 % find a new job,

— 26 % register for remedial and guidance periods,

— 22 % are candidates for training leading to a qualification.

In the Flemish region, *VDAB* places a particular emphasis on complementary training, with a high level of placement. This formula tends to be targeted on the most employable people with good levels of education.

VDAB and *FOREM* also conduct schemes for long-term unemployed people with few qualifications.

3.3.4.5. Adult training in the Brussels region

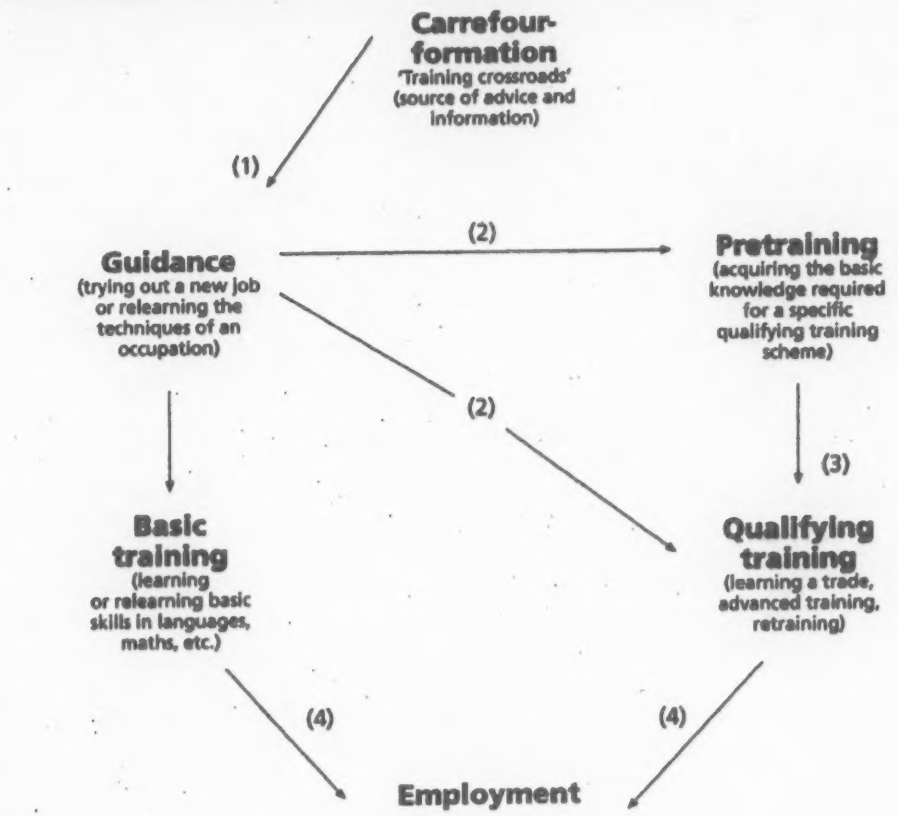
Since the decree of 17 March 1994 of the French Community Commission (*Commission communautaire française — COCOF*), the *IBFFP* (*Institut bruxellois francophone pour la formation professionnelle* — French-speaking Brussels Institute for Vocational Training) has been responsible for vocational training for French speakers in Brussels. *IBFFP* (or Brussels-Training) offers some directly managed training schemes based on the *FOREM* model. It therefore organises vocational guidance and induction schemes within the framework of the *COISP*s (see Section 3.3.4.2), industrial training and service sector training.

Table 32: Overall activity of IBFFP, by number of training hours and trainees

	Training hours	Training schemes launched	Training schemes for people on work experience	Training completed
1994	1 388 695	3 266	3 942	3 131
1995	1 460 180	3 571	4 377	3 525
1996	1 600 704	3 746	4 496	3 732

SOURCE: IBFFP, ANNUAL REPORT, 1997.

Figure 18 — Presentation of the work of Brussels-Training



As Brussels-Training is a very recent organisation, training is provided through a whole range of partnerships with external public and private bodies. This has the advantage that the service providers achieving the best results in comparison with the objectives sought can be chosen.

3.3.5. Training for the middle classes (IFPME/VIZO)

3.3.5.1. Head of enterprise training

The aim of head of enterprise training is to provide anyone who wants to or has just set up their own business with the necessary skills. In principle, this training lasts two years and is organised largely as evening classes in training centres for people aged 18 or over.

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The training includes a theoretical strand given in a training centre and a practical strand in enterprise. Curricula are strictly in keeping with the actual requirements of the labour market. Courses are updated each year and new training schemes are added.

The theoretical strand includes management courses which tackle all aspects of the management of an SME (administrative, financial and fiscal, IT and personnel management). Vocational courses are intended to provide trainees with the skills that they need to carry on a particular occupation on their own. The practical strand includes a period of work experience in enterprise.

At the end of the first year, which is devoted to theoretical training, head of enterprise candidates receive a certificate from the government of the French community. At the end of training, students must pass a number of examinations including general education, vocational knowledge and professional practice in order to obtain the head of enterprise diploma which is awarded by the centre on behalf of the government of the French community (in the French community) and by *VIZO* (in the Flemish community). This diploma states that the candidate has satisfied all the conditions needed for entry into the occupation.

Table 33 reviews numbers and final examination successes in 1995 in the French community and in 1998 and 1999 in the Flemish community.

Here again, especially in the French community, men seem to be outnumbering women.

Table 33: Number of participants and success rate in training for the middle classes

(a) French community, 1995

	Convened	Present	Successful			% success
			Total	Men	Women	
Total	3 145	2 241	1 552	986	566	69

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1996. TABLE SIMPLIFIED BY THE AUTHOR.

(b) Flemish community, 1998 and 1999

	Present	Successful			% success
		Total	Men	Women	
1998	3 894	3 594	1 891	1 703	92
1999	3 704	3 448	1 765	1 683	93

SOURCE: VIZO STATISTICS.

3.3.5.2. Continuing training

These are courses for self-employed people or heads of enterprise that are intended to update their knowledge and provide them with the expertise that they need to keep their enterprises competitive. This training takes the form of further training or retraining sessions. Further training sessions last an average of three hours.

Table 34: Continuing training — number of training sessions in the French community, 1995

Training sessions and retraining courses	Number of sessions	Number of hours
Training	3 715	11 145
• in management	1 855	5 565
• in advanced techniques	1 860	5 580
Retraining courses	n.a.	6 721

n.a. = not available.

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1996.

In the Flemish community, in 1999:

— 15 717 study days and seminars were organised by centres,

— 2 428 days were organised by professional and multi-industry bodies,

— 27 273 hours of continuing training were given.

The sectoral breakdown of these continuing training schemes is as follows (in %):

— European managers	2.91
— Communication	3.07
— Business creators	1.19
— Technical training in international trade	1.62
— Management	17.14
— Computing	60.54
— Languages	2.37
— Sales	11.16

The extent to which IT has invaded the skills needed in enterprise is evident. It is unfortunate that in the French community continuing training in languages has met with little success. It may well be that the French-speaking target group is attending *EPS* (social advancement education).

3.3.6. Other training

3.3.6.1. Training in agriculture

This post-school training is for people aged at least 18 working in agriculture or in an allied area. It attracts a largely male public (81 % of those enrolled), and women enrolled for this type of training are trained as 'helpers'. The training schemes for which the regulations make provision differ in terms of the type of training and in the different communities. They are organised by approved agricultural centres and institutes.

Prior to the law of 8 August 1980, this type of training came under the authority of the Minister for Agriculture. Since the law of 8 August 1980, responsibility for it has been devolved to the communities and, at present, it comes under the authority of the various community executives.

While the old Royal Decree of 23 August 1974 has been retained in the Flemish and German-speaking communities, this type of training has been reorganised by a specific decree of 10 July 1984 in the French community. From the point of view of content, there is no difference between the old Royal Decree and the new decree.

There continues to be three types of training:

— type A comprises remedial courses for people who have had inadequate basic education. Training lasts for 75 hours;

— type B includes courses providing specific training for workers already in the profession or taking over a farm. Modern organisational and farming methods are examined. Training lasts for 75 hours;

— type C takes the form of periodical retraining courses for various types of farm (technical courses and courses in agricultural management). Training lasts at least 20 hours.

3.3.6.2. Training for disabled people

Training for disabled people was subsidised until 1991 by the *Fonds national pour le reclassement social des handicaps/Rijksfonds voor sociale reclassering van de minder-validen* (National Fund for the Social Rehabilitation of the Disabled). The *VFSIPH* (Flemish Fund for the Social Integration of the Disabled) established by the decree of 27 June 1990 and operational since 1 January 1991, and the *AWIPH* (Walloon Agency for the Integration of the Disabled) operational since 1 July 1995, have taken over the responsibilities of the former community fund for the integration of the disabled and the educational, social and medical care fund for the disabled.

The *AWIPH* and the *VFSIPH* offer, among other things, a range of appropriate training for disabled people in 14 approved vocational training centres throughout the Walloon region and in 12 centres in the Flemish region.

In 1997, 1 166 disabled people attended vocational training in Wallonia (including integration into ordinary education, vocational adaptation contracts, training in approved centres by the *AWIPH* and training schemes provided by *FOREM*), in

accordance with the rehabilitation plans drawn up for them by *AWIPH*'s regional offices.

According to the Flemish Ministry, 795 disabled people attended vocational training courses in 1999.

3.3.6.3. Distance learning (enseignement à distance/afstand onderwijs)

The correspondence courses introduced by Ministerial circular in 1959 had two main objectives: to make education more democratic and to pave the way for permanent education.

The law of 5 March 1965 gives this kind of education legal status and specifies its tasks:

— preparation for secondary education (examination) boards (both upper and lower);

— preparation for the civil service competitions organised by the public authorities (*Bureau de séléction de l'administration fédérale — SELOR; Vast Wervingssecretariat — VWS*).

Rather than diplomas, certificates of success are awarded.

At the time of the 1982 Constitutional revision, responsibility was devolved from the State to the communities and this type of education was renamed 'distance learning'.

In the French community, the decree of 18 December 1984 organises and specifies its objectives. In addition to traditional aims, the purpose of distance learning is to provide courses, based on the curricula in force, for children of Belgian nationality, speaking French, but resident outside Belgium.

The service also runs specific courses for prisoners and people in hospital. At present, IT and modern language courses are a major area of work. A special supply of retraining and further training courses is also available for teachers.

Courses are designed by teacher-designers and are marked by teacher-markers who are paid for this service. In the case of courses in administrative subjects, teachers are grade 1 (university) civil servants.

Many courses are offered under this type of education (over 160 at the primary and secondary levels in the French community).

In the Flemish community, distance education is the responsibility of the *Begeleid Individueel Studeren* (*BIS*) which uses a multimedia platform. The Flemish community has also announced its intention to regulate this type of education in order to incorporate it into a much wider context taking account in particular of social advancement education.

In higher education, agreements with the *Open Universiteit* of the Netherlands and the Open University of the United Kingdom make it possible for students to gain access to higher education by distance learning.

Many students enrol for courses, as the way in which this type of education is organised is very flexible, for instance:

— individual study materials are provided and there are plans to use multimedia systems,

— enrolments are flexible,

— people are free to study at their own pace and training is modular.

Table 35: Number of people enrolled in distance learning from 1986 to 1996 in the French community

Year	Number of enrolments	% change in comparison with previous year
1986	10 000	
1987	16 020	+60
1988	22 758	+42
1989	22 964	+1
1990	22 231	-3
1991	23 097	+4
1992	22 210	-4
1993	15 823	-29
1994	14 440	-9
1995	13 574	-6
1996	12 426	-8

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1998.

In 1993, there was a substantial fall in the number of people enrolled with numbers continuing to fall up to 1996. The introduction in 1993 of a registration fee of up to BEF 1500 may well go some way towards explaining this downturn in numbers, but it would undoubtedly be interesting to look for other causes or variables. The reasons for this downturn have yet to be studied. Some groups of people, for instance the unemployed, are, however, exempt from registration fees.

In the Flemish community, 30 025 people were enrolled in the 1996/97 academic year, which, in proportional terms, is more than twice the population enrolled in the French community. This figure continued to increase in 1999, reaching 48 882 enrolments, as a result of a new marketing approach in the media and the modernisation and computerisation of the service.

3.3.6.4. Training for young people in socio-occupational integration agencies

Alongside the institutional supply of training, the world of associations (for instance non-profit-making associations) has developed work/training initiatives targeted at people with problems who are no longer subject to compulsory education and who, for many reasons, cannot be trained by conventional training suppliers (dropping out of school, failure in large training centres, failure in the working world).

Since the 1980s, Belgium has developed a legal and regulatory system enabling people, through appropriate methods within small working groups, to acquire the

vocational qualifications that they need for integration or reintegration into working life.

The centres that have been set up can be divided into two main groups:

— the *Entreprises de formation par le travail — EFTs* (work training enterprises) (formally called *EAPs — Entreprises d'apprentissage professionnel* (vocational training enterprises) in the Walloon region;

— the *Organismes d'insertion socio-professionnelle — OISPs* (socio-occupational integration agencies) also in the Walloon region.

These centres are designed to accommodate:

— jobseekers aged under 25, including the long-term unemployed,

— the long-term unemployed aged over 25 (who have been unemployed for one year prior to entering training),

— young people who have not obtained a lower secondary education certificate (nowadays replaced by the CES2D).

Forty-five per cent of the funding of these centres comes from the European Social Fund (ESF). The remaining 55 % is provided by the Belgian public authorities. The ESF share is divided between various priority areas. For instance, in the French community between 1991 and 1993, these were:

— Strand 1: pre-training — initial training;

— Strand 2: training for the practice of occupations using the new technologies;

— Strand 3: training schemes for specific groups:

  • disabled people,

  • women (women returning to the labour market or preparing to practice a trade in which women are under-represented),

  • migrants.

The curricula of these centres must include a minimum of 300 and a maximum of 2 100 training hours. These training hours must be given within a period of 18 months.

3.3.6.5. Sectoral initiatives

A number of branches of industry have long played an active role in the training of young people and/or adults, either through employers' federations or through a joint fund: this is particularly true of, among others, the metalworking, construction and textile sectors.

Under the 1999/2000 multi-industry agreements, the social partners agreed to channel a specific percentage (0.25 %) of the wage bill into vocational training. Although compliance with these agreements has varied, they have led to a substantial increase in sectoral initiatives in many industries which have taken the initiative to set up jointly managed vocational training centres. These offer, encourage or coordinate training schemes, while also analysing vocational training needs and the training supply.

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An important example in all three regions of Belgium is Fabrimetal (*). This is a federation bringing together 1 100 enterprises — both large and SMEs – working in five industrial sectors:

— non-ferrous metals,

— metal and plastic products,

— mechanical engineering,

— transport,

— electrotechnology, information technologies and medical technologies.

Fabrimetal's sectors play a driving role in the Belgian economy and account for 25 % of employment in industry and 33 % of exports from the Belgian and Luxembourg economic union.

In the area of learning, Fabrimetal has long had two main aims:

— qualifications and excellence,

— socio-occupational integration.

Fabrimetal also organises its own training facilities, curricula and methods.

This type of training may provide an answer to the shortage of young qualified people. Growing numbers of employers feel that the industrial apprenticeship organised by Fabrimetal is a new path for the training and recruitment of skilled personnel.

(*) Fabrimetal became Agoria in the final quarter of 2000.

Chapter 4
Legal and financial framework

4.1. Legal framework for vocational education and training

4.1.1. Introduction

Decision-making mechanisms in the area of vocational training are extremely complex in Belgium. Each of the six federated entities of the Belgian State and the federal State itself are responsible in one way or another for vocational training and the powers that they have are exclusive and autonomous. For vocational training, this means that there are seven different legislators, seven different governments and coexisting legislation which varies depending on the place. The actual distribution of powers has to be assessed *rationae loci*. In this monograph, it was therefore impossible in practice to detail the mechanisms of vocational training in Belgium and choices had to be made. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that there are several organising authorities for vocational education and training organised in schools as a result of the School Pact discussed above (see Section 2.1).

It is possible, however, to look at emerging trends in each of the regions and communities. The key is to provide an overview of the institutional complexity surrounding vocational training.

4.1.2. Distribution of powers

4.1.2.1. Background

Belgium's political and administrative structures (see Section 1.1) include three communities (Flemish, French and German-speaking) and three regions (Flemish (*), Walloon and Brussels) in addition to the federal State. In the Brussels region, there is also a final federated entity whose existence dates back to 1993: the French Community Commission (*Commission communautaire française — COCOF*). This latter institution, which has substantial powers over vocational training, exists in Brussels only for French speakers. There is therefore an institutional asymmetry between the organisation of vocational training in the north and south of the country. We shall analyse the responsibilities of each of the political institutions: communities, regions, the French Community Commission and the federal State.

4.1.2.2. Responsibilities of the communities

4.1.2.2.1.

The three communities have been responsible for training since they were created in 1980. Particular bodies have been set up for this purpose, in particular *FOREM* and *IFPME* in the French community and *VDAB*, *VIZO*, and *VFSIPH* in the Flemish community. As a result of their close links with social security, some issues have, however, remained at national level (for instance, paid educational leave and industrial apprenticeship contracts). These issues are the responsibility of the federal Ministry for Employment and Labour.

(*) For non-Belgian readers unfamiliar with the communities, Flemish and Dutch-speaking can be considered synonyms.

4.1.2.2.2.

Responsibility for education was devolved to the three communities in 1988, with the exception of:

— the length of compulsory education,

— the minimum conditions for the award of certificates, and

— the pension scheme for teachers, which remains a federal responsibility.

These three issues are to be interpreted restrictively.

4.1.2.2.3.

Education respects the principles of the School Pact (equal — neutral — free) while the social partners are more involved in training. Education pursues an objective of global education whereas training is geared more towards directly serving the labour market. Nevertheless the structural autonomy of education, including vocational education, with respect to training has increased the number of different kinds of status for young people in education. In each part of the country there are at least 20.

4.1.2.2.4.

As education and training have been devolved to the communities, it might have been expected that the communities would be responsible for vocational education and training overall. This assumption is not quite correct for the following reasons:

— the federal authority has retained various powers (see Section 2.3.1);

— the three regions remain responsible for help with jobseeking, an issue that is closely linked with vocational training;

— the French community's responsibilities for training (and not education) have been lessened by their transfer to the Walloon region and the French Community Commission in 1993.

4.1.2.3. Responsibilities of the regions

4.1.2.3.1.

The regions are responsible for employment. Employment should be understood here as programmes to return jobseekers to work. The regulations on employment, in the sense in which it is traditionally understood, and unemployment are the responsibility of the federal State. Regional powers over employment remain linked to vocational training. These interlinked powers in practice raise problems only in Brussels. In Flanders, regional and community responsibilities have been merged, whereas in Wallonia, powers over training were transferred to the region in 1993. The Walloon region now exercises the community's powers over vocational training (except in German-speaking territory).

4.1.2.3.2.

The Brussels region has set up the *Office régional bruxellois de l'emploi — ORBEM* (Brussels Regional Office for Employment) in order to carry out programmes to return jobseekers to work.

4.1.2.3.3.

Following the merger, in 1980, of the Flemish region and the Flemish community, the Flemish community immediately took over the powers of the Flemish region. Since the outset, *VDAB* (see Section 3.3.4) has therefore had powers over training and return to work programmes in Flanders and training in Dutch-speaking institutions in Brussels.

4.1.2.3.4.

Since 1993, the Walloon region has had full powers over training and return to work programmes (except in German-speaking areas where it has no powers over training). It exercises these powers through *FOREM*, a public interest body which is now organised on a regional basis and managed jointly by workers' and employers' representatives (see Section 3.3.4). *FOREM* also plays an important part in vocational training. It should nevertheless be borne in mind that, following its regionalisation, this body is no longer responsible for Brussels.

4.1.2.4. Responsibilities of the French Community Commission

4.1.2.4.1.

At the same time as the Walloon region, the French Community Commission *(Commission communautaire française — COCOF)* inherited powers over training for French-speaking institutions in the territory of Brussels. These powers are exercised through a body called Brussels-Training (see Section 3.3.4.5).

4.1.2.4.2.

Three bodies connected with training and answerable to different governments are therefore official operators in Brussels: *ORBEM* (Brussels region) for return to work programmes, while *VDAB* (Flemish community) and Brussels-Training (*COCOF*) are responsible for training for Dutch and French speakers respectively. This does not include education, including vocational education, for which either the French or the Flemish community has responsibility in Brussels.

4.1.2.5. Responsibilities of the federal State

4.1.2.5.1.

In education, the federal State has remained responsible for establishing the beginning and end of compulsory education, the minimum conditions under which certificates are awarded and the pension scheme. Only the first two of these issues are likely to have an impact on vocational training.

4.1.2.5.2.

At a time when the European Union is working towards the equivalence of the certificates awarded by its various Member States, it seemed prudent for the federal authority to retain minimum powers of coordination of the certificates awarded in Belgium. The federal power establishes the minimum number of hours required to obtain certificates. The content of curricula is the responsibility of the communities, with the obvious proviso that they must take account of European rules when deciding on this content.

4.1.2.5.3.

In the area of training, the federal State is responsible for issues closely linked to labour law or social security. The latter case includes, for instance, the law on alternance training which does not introduce a new training system but entitles employers to reduce their social security contributions if they recruit young jobseekers combining employment with vocational training.

4.1.2.5.4.

In labour law, history shows that training has been almost completely absent from collective labour agreements in Belgium. Traditionally, training has been covered more by contracts binding employers and workers than by agreements binding employers' organisations and trade unions. Multi-industry agreements have nevertheless been concluded since 1986 in order to include training in the content of collective agreements. They have been accompanied by financial incentives from the State, in particular the creation of an employment fund.

4.1.2.6. Final considerations on the distribution of powers

The distribution of powers discussed above in the area of vocational training makes the system incredibly complex and opaque and entails a risk of duplication or even 'triplication', especially in Brussels. It is generally the case in federal States that structural measures are spontaneously enacted to coordinate the policies of States or regions, as well as the federal authority, on vocational training. In Belgium, there is little or no such cooperation, perhaps because federalism is dissociative and not associative.

4.1.3. Role of the social partners

4.1.3.1.

In education, including vocational education, the role of the social partners is very limited. It is the organising authorities that are the chief proponents. These are, in accordance with the principles of the School Pact, public authorities (communities, provinces, municipalities), private or religious authorities and non-profit-making associations.

4.1.3.2.

In the area of training, the social partners play a paramount role. For instance, *FOREM* is jointly administered by workers' and employers' representatives. Moreover, *FOREM* is assisted in its work by 20 or so subregional employment and training committees, also set up on a joint basis, which provide a forum for initiatives, ambitions and specific local features connected with the development of local markets to express themselves. The social partners also play a role in the conclusion of multi-industry agreements connected with training.

4.1.3.3.

We noted in Section 3.2.3 that joint committees and joint apprenticeship committees had a very important role to play as regards the organisation of alternance vocational education. In the area of alternance, the social partners are actively involved in approving apprenticeship centres and in developing training in the occupational field. Section 5.1 will also show that they are very widely involved in profiling occupations and drawing up the qualification profiles on which training profiles are based.

4.1.4. Advisory and supervisory bodies

4.1.4.1.

Various committees and commissions have also been set up in order to give opinions to the Ministries of Education. The French community, for instance, has a *Conseil de l'éducation et de la formation — CEF* (Education and Training Council) which was set up in 1990. This Council includes representatives from education and training. Its main task, as its title indicates, is to promote the training and education organised or subsidised by the community. It gives opinions on various issues. It is then up to the various organising authorities to put these opinions and recommendations into practice if they so wish.

The yearly report on the situation of education and training published by the CEF is intended to make educational policy more transparent. Another major task of the CEF is to issue opinions on the relations between education, training and employment and on the theme of training for employment.

4.1.4.2.

Supervisory bodies have also been set up in the various communities. In practice, the allocation of operating subsidies to institutions and the uses to which these subsidies are put are supervised by the audit departments of the Ministries of Education of the different communities. The ways in which education and training are supervised differ in the different areas.

4.1.4.3.

At local level, committees have been set up to bring together all the actors (teachers, parents, social partners, etc.). These local organisations, which cover a number of institutions, must, among other tasks, submit proposals to the minister for the creation, in particular at secondary level, of new sections more in keeping with the area's socioeconomic development.

4.2. Financing

4.2.1. General background

This section looks in particular at the principles by which the various forms of vocational education and training are financed in Belgium, as it is difficult to assess the actual expenditure connected with the organisation of this type of instruction. Although figures are available, they tend to give only a global overview. Moreover, giving overly detailed figures for each type of training would make the information provided less comprehensible.

Funds for vocational training, like education and teaching in general, come in particular from the main funding agencies, i.e. the communities. Prior to the reform of the State in 1988, the State granted the Flemish, French and German-speaking communities appropriations for the operation of the schools that they set up and for the subsidies to be paid by the communities to schools eligible for such subsidies.

The 1988 and 1993 reforms made no change: the communities retained full powers over education, including financing. As part of the devolution of powers from the national to the community level, a financing law specially enacted in 1989 gives the communities a share of revenue (endowment) from value added tax (VAT).

From 1990 onwards it is impossible to provide education budget figures broken down by the various types of education in Belgium since there is no longer any central management (collection and processing) service for statistical data able to give exact and not fragmentary budgets, and data relating to the three communities.

The French and Flemish communities provide separate statistical data on public expenditure on education. The data for the German-speaking community are included in data from the French community.

4.2.2. Education budgets (1) of the communities

4.2.2.1. Education budgets of the French community

Table 36: Trends in the total education budget of the French community, 1993 to 2000 (in million BEF)

Education	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Nursery	10 960.4	11 673.7	12 116.2	11 722.9	12 224.1	12 266.5	12 521.4	12 750.8
Primary	29 124.5	29 523.8	30 368.9	30 844.4	31 899.2	32 580.8	33 699.8	35 057.4
Secondary (including CEFA)	71 477	73 672.4	73 977.2	71 642	72 807.1	71 558.9	72 671.4	73 829.5
Special	9 545.3	10 071.4	10 351.3	10 259.8	10 558.5	10 696.5	11 002	11 241.6
Higher non- university	9 683.6	10 165.3	10 669.8	10 750.8	11 401.9	11 739.5	11 906.4	12 271.6
University	18 958.3	19 565.2	17 256.4	17 165.3	17 648	17 663.4	17 905.5	18 160.8
Social advancement	3 328.7	4 025.8	4 433.1	4 467.5	4 673.4	4 411.8	4 443.8	4 612.8
Art	3 883.3	4 028.7	4 134.8	4 161.4	4 226.4	4 316.9	4 309.7	4 446.3
Distance learning	114.6	112.3	114.7	114.1	113.2	112.7	111.5	116.4
Subtotal	**157 075.7**	**162 838.6**	**163 422.4**	**161 128.2**	**165 551.8**	**165 347**	**168 571.5**	**172 487.2**
PMS — IMS centres	2 236.1	2 316.5	2 359.3	2 282	2 373.1	2 469.4	2 979.1	3 027.2
School buildings	2 125	2 125	2 125	2 125	2 125	3 341.9	3 098	3 166
Subtotal	**4 361.1**	**4 441.5**	**4 484.3**	**4 407**	**4 498.1**	**5 811.3**	**6 077.1**	**6 193.2**
Total	**161 436.8**	**167 280.1**	**167 906.7**	**165 535.2**	**170 049.9**	**171 158.3**	**174 648.6**	**178 680.4**

EUR 1 = BEF 40.3399.

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING STATISTICS, YEARBOOK 2000.

Cost per pupil/student in the budget of the French community

It is impossible to provide detailed figures on the full cost of a student in the various levels and types of education. The budgets for educational inspections, psychological-medical and social centres, school buildings' funds and study grants are not taken into account.

The costs per student, including all networks, in Table 37 are based on the ratio between:

— the community's specific budget for the level of education in question;

— the number of students surveyed in this level of education.

(1) All the budget data are expressed in francs for the year in question and therefore any comparison from one year to another must take account of parameters not connected with actual education: increase in the cost of living, social planning, sectoral and multisectoral agreements.

Table 37: Education budget of the French community — Cost per student, 1992/93 to 1995/96 (in BEF)

Level		1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
Basic		84 087	86 201	87 168	86 131
	Nursery	66 843	69 592	71 054	69 941
	Primary	93 437	95 367	96 104	94 873
Secondary		211 663	216 919	216 062	209 183
Special		361 149	377 748	382 434	376 594
Social advancement		26 396			
	Enrolled		23 890	23 219	21 838
	Enrolments		28 676	30 964	32 270
Higher		153 432	151 420	152 648	149 901
	Short type	148 705	144 021	143 792	142 035
	Long type	168 050	176 113	184 756	180 408

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1996 (SIMPLIFIED TABLE).

For secondary education, the figures concern only full-time education. In the case of social advancement, bearing in mind that in 1993/94 the new scheme introduced a method of enrolment by module rather than by section, the number of enrolments increased substantially. In order not to falsify comparisons with the previous years, the calculations are based both on the number of enrolments and on the number of students enrolled.

4.2.2.2. Education budgets of the Flemish community

Table 38: Trends in the total education budget of the Flemish community, 1993 to 2000 (in million BEF)

Level	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Basic	51 146.6	53 267.6	55 338.8	57 505.2	58 209.6	60 881.9	64 017.4	66 117.3
Special basic	6 252.6	6 717.7	6 505.6	7 132.3	7 397.7	7 934.7	8 397.5	8 980.9
Secondary	91 707.7	94 541.2	97 384.6	97 980.7	100 044.0	100 279.4	100 020.1	101 283.0
Special secondary	5 456.1	5 794.7	6 398.4	6 885.2	7 100.6	7 306.3	7 557.2	7 776.6
Higher	16 079.4	17 099.0	17 698.1	18 769.2	19 065.8	19 295.2	20 300.9	20 825.3
University	21 196.8	21 520.9	21 699.0	21 581.5	21 435.6	22 055.1	22 638.7	23 305.0
Social advancement	2 955.9	3 146.3	3 510.0	3 720.3	3 819.6	4 033.2	4 260.7	4 804.3
Basic education	344.8	349	458.4	508.4	514.7	596.3	601.2	602.7
Distance learning	40.5	39.9	40.7	41.3	41.3	52.8	75.8	123.6
Part-time art	3 431.9	3 798.2	3 896.2	4 139.1	4 312.3	4 463.3	4 610.8	4 823.7

SOURCE: FIGURES FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE FLEMISH COMMUNITY.

Table 39: Cost per pupil/student in the budget of the Flemish community, 1998 (in 1 000 BEF)

Level	1998
Basic	98.1
Special basic	315.4
Secondary	229.3
Special secondary	469.9
Higher (non-university)	213.9
University	405.4
Social advancement	27.1
Part-time art	32.9

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE FLEMISH COMMUNITY, L'ENSEIGNEMENT EN CHIFFRES, 1998.

4.2.2.3. Education budgets of the German-speaking community

Table 40: Trends in the education budget of the German-speaking community, 1993 to 2000 (in million BEF)

Level	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Psychological, medical and social centres	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	35.58	34.71	35.39	37.60	41.09
Primary education	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	806.24	803.10	808.29	846.39	885.68
Secondary education	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 073.46	1 086.45	1 088.57	1 104.88	1 092.47
Higher and university education	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	63.38	60.72	62.82	65.19	63.52
Special education	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	144.32	147.04	142.29	153.73	150.58
Art education	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	37.00	37.74	38.24	39.35	42.80
Other	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	208.44	208.26	208.62	244.33	219.01
Infrastructure expenditure	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	44.52	85.00	118.10	181.45	99.43
Total	**2 153.40**	**2 439.40**	**2 511.40**	**2 412.94**	**2 463.02**	**2 502.32**	**2 672.92**	**2 594.58**

n.a. = not available.

SOURCE: FIGURES FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY.

It would be risky to compare Tables 36 to 40 in detail, because they do not relate to the same academic years and their internal composition differs.

With many reservations, it seems that for some education levels (for instance basic education) the cost per student shown by the budgets has similar dimensions in the north and south of the country, all proportions remaining the same.

4.2.3. Continuing training for the middle classes and SMEs

Fixed costs in the case of training for the middle classes (see Section 3.3.5) include operating and personnel costs. Operating costs are funded by grants from the communities, i.e. operating grants which in particular include contributions from employers' organisations. These operating grants also include fixed subsidies per unit of activity. This unit corresponds to one hour of general education provision in apprenticeship for the middle classes and, using a coefficient, is adjusted to the type of training.

The enrolment fees paid by students attending head of enterprise or continuing training courses also fund operating costs. The centres for training for the middle classes decide whether or not enrolment fees are to be paid. If they decide to levy enrolment fees, they fix the amount themselves since they are organised as non-profit-making associations. Financing criteria are laid down in a Royal Decree of 1979.

Personnel costs come on top of operating costs. They are financed by fixed grants allocated pro rata to the number of regularly enrolled students per academic year.

Table 41: Budget for training for the middle classes in the French community, 1992 to 1995 (in million BEF)

	1992	1993	1994	1995
Personnel costs of the institution	137.1	149.6	151	173.9
Operating and organisational costs	44.8	43.3	49	54.1
Subsidies awarded to the institution for training	548.6	578.1	643.2	735.3
New property charges	97.9	97	97.6	115.1
Overall budget	**828.4**	**868.1**	**940.9**	**1 078.4**

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1996 (SIMPLIFIED TABLE).

Table 42: Budget allocated to training for the middle classes in the German-speaking community, 1993 to 1995 (in million BEF)

	1993	1994	1995
Overall budget	67	67.7	68.8

SOURCE: FIGURES FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY.

Table 43: Budget allocated to training for the middle classes in the Flemish community, 1992 to 1999 (in million BEF)

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Personnel costs of the institution	165.2	193.9	206.6	217.5	224.8	231.5	218.6	243.8
Operating and organisational costs	92.5	93.6	82.2	86.8	143.0	118.0	143.6	187.7
Subsidies awarded to the institution for training	1 260.0	1 321.5	1 414.4	1 395.2	1 487.5	1 538.4	1 528.1	1 523.9
Overall budget	**1 518.4**	**1 609.0**	**1 703.3**	**1 699.6**	**1 855.4**	**1 887.9**	**1 890.3**	**1 955.4**

SOURCE: *FIGURES FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE FLEMISH COMMUNITY.*

4.2.4. Social advancement education

Since 1989, social advancement education (see Section 3.3.2) has been financed chiefly by the communities; before that it was funded by the national authorities. Operating costs are covered chiefly by grants and appropriations from the French and Flemish community budgets and, in addition, by the enrolment fees paid by students.

A Royal Decree of 20 May 1997 lays down the methods by which training sections and units are to be subsidised in the French community.

A Royal Decree of 5 January 1987 states that enrolment fees must be paid by students from the 1987/88 academic year onwards. These fees vary from BEF 1 000 to 2 000 depending on whether the number of course hours per year is below or above 240.

In certain circumstances, full-time unemployed people and those receiving the *Minimex* (subsistence wage) are exempt from enrolment fees. For students attending six hours of evening classes per week, the fees are currently BEF 2 400 per academic year and, for those attending 12 hours per week, BEF 4 800 per academic year. This funding by students helps to finance the operation of social advancement education in the three education networks.

In order to ensure equality between the three education networks (see Section 2.2.1), public funding is calculated per course hour per student. Public authority action to fund the operation of social advancement educaton takes the form of operating appropriations.

These budget amounts also fairly correctly reflect the groups attending the three networks. The networks' shares vary in the different communities.

Table 44: Breakdown by network of the social advancement education budget in 1996 in the French community (in million BEF)

Community	Official, provincial and municipal	Private	Total
1 195.2	1 826.4	1 114.1	4 135.7

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, 1996.

Table 45: Trends in the breakdown by network of the social advancement education budget in the Flemish community, 1998 to 2000 (in million BEF)

Years	Community	Official, provincial and municipal	Private	Other	Total
1998	1 031.6	1 103.9	1 892.9	4.8	4 033.2
1999	1 125.3	1 132.5	1 990.7	12.2	4 260.7
2000	1 291.8	1 278.3	2 217.2	17.0	4 804.3

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FLEMISH COMMUNITY. STATISTICAL YEARBOOK, 1999–2000.

In the Flemish community, students enrolling for social advancement education courses are required to pay a minimum contribution. This contribution, set by the Flemish government, depends on the number of course hours chosen in the year and varies between BEF 15 and BEF 30 per hour. The centres for adult education (*Centrum voor Volwassenenonderwijs*) are free to set the amount of these contributions within the limits laid down by law.

By decision of the government, the following may be exempted from payment:

— people receiving the 'minimex', i.e. a minimum wage from the *Openbaar Centrum voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn — OCMW* (public social welfare centre);

— unemployed people receiving benefit/compulsorily-registered unemployed jobseekers (except those in early retirement);

— political refugees or people whose application for the status of political refugee is being processed;

— prisoners;

— any person dependent on a person covered by the preceding categories;

— students in part-time or full-time compulsory education;

— people attending courses to learn Dutch.

4.2.5. VDAB and FOREM vocational training schemes

VDAB and *FOREM* expenditure is covered by a subsidy from the communities and by other vocational training subsidies.

For instance, on the basis of the 1995 budget, the main sources of funds for the schemes and services offered by *FOREM* were:

— the subsidy included in the Walloon region budget: close on 72.1 % of revenue;

— the subsidy included in the German-speaking community budget: 0.4 %;

— the ESF (European Social Fund): 2.4 %;

— other income, in particular from sales of goods or services resulting from *FOREM*'s activities and financial products: 18.8 %;

— at federal level, Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour schemes under cooperation agreements or conventions: the *Plan d'accompagnement des chômeurs — PAC* (unemployed assistance plan), National Employment Fund, etc.: 5.1 %;

— income from international cooperation under one or other European programme: 0.1 %;

— other: 1.1 %.

For *FOREM* and *VDAB* there is also co-financing with the sectors of industry concerned. Under the multi-industry agreements, the social partners agreed from 1991/92 onwards to channel a percentage (initially 0.25 %) of the wage bill into training and the promotion of employment, in particular for high-risk groups (the long-term unemployed, unemployed people with few skills, young people in part-time education, and jobseekers wishing to find new jobs in the labour market after a period of inactivity).

The training bonus offered to unemployed people attending training managed directly by *FOREM* and *VDAB* or organised in cooperation with third parties is currently BEF 40 per hour. A training bonus is an allowance paid by the institution (*FOREM* or *VDAB*) to unemployed people attending their courses. The *VDAB* bonus for child-minding is BEF 180 per half-day in the case of people with children under the age of three.

Table 46: Actual budget expenditure committed between 1989 and 1997 by VDAB, broken down by item (in 1 000 BEF)

	1989	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Centres set up and managed by VDAB	2 178 213	2 657 870	2 932 665	3 159 991	3 338 935	3 329 269	3 195 108	3 292 019
Centres set up in cooperation with enterprises	113 279	98 188	20 242	14 742	7 941	23 858	18 039	12 917
Approved centres	25 616	36 261	9 067	17 842	5 085	11 152	7 696	9 574
Individual training schemes	605	3 024	2 822	2 283	2 992	3 089	0	0
Total	2 317 713	2 795 343	2 964 796	3 194 858	3 354 953	3 367 368	3 220 843	3 314 510

SOURCES: VDAB ANNUAL REPORTS.

Table 47: Actual budget expenditure committed between 1989 and 1995 by FOREM (in million BEF)

Year	Total	Operation	Investment
1989	2 145.4	1 959.2	186.1
1990	2 355.2	2 172.9	182.3
1991	1 858.7	1 747.8	110.8
1992	1 957.9	1 835.4	122.4
1993	2 256.6	2 134.4	122.1
1994	2.642.0	2 537.1	104.8
1995	2 684.0	2 548.1	135.7

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, GENERAL STATISTICS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING: 1995/96 YEARBOOK, VOLUME I, 1996.

The above figures are intended merely to give an indication of *FOREM* and *VDAB* expenditure on vocational training. A comparative study would be possible only if these figures were related to other parameters such as the number of hours attended by jobseekers in the various subregional directorates, the number of trainers, etc. The German-speaking community has been responsible for managing its own vocational training activities from 1 January 2000.

4.2.6. Vocational training schemes run by the *Institut bruxellois francophone pour la formation professionnelle*

The figures for *VDAB* given in the previous section include vocational training costs for Dutch speakers in Brussels.

The same does not apply to the figures for *FOREM*. As a reminder, for French speakers in Brussels, it is the French Community Commission (*COCOF*) that has had supervisory powers in the area of vocational training since July 1993. *COCOF* set up, by decree of 17 March 1994, the *Institut bruxellois francophone pour la formation professionnelle — IBFFP* (French-speaking Brussels Institute for Vocational Training) which is also known as Brussels-Training).

As this body was set up only recently, budget data are very limited.

Table 48: Breakdown of the IBFFP budget, 1995 and 1996 (in million BEF)

	1995 Adjusted budget	1996 Initial budget
Operations	674	545
Partnership	131	133
Total	805	678
PAC	80	64

PAC = plan d'accompagnement des chômeurs (unemployment assistance plan) subsidised by the federal government.

SOURCE: IBFFP

Chapter 5
Qualitative aspects

5.1. Certification and qualification

5.1.1. The creation of the Community Commission for Occupations and Qualifications

The decree of the French community of 27 April 1994, establishing the *Conseil général de concertation pour l'enseignement secondaire* (General Council for Secondary Education), gave this body the task, among others, of 'drawing up education profiles, i.e. the set of competences to be acquired for the award of the qualification certificate at the end of secondary education'. The aim was to correct the evident mismatch between the level of training given in technical and vocational education and employers' increasingly demanding requirements.

Steps needed to be taken consequently to enable technical and vocational education to regain a genuine educational value. It was for this reason that the same decree made provision for the creation of the *Commission communautaire des professions et des qualifications — CCPQ* (Community Commission for Occupations and Qualifications). The composition of the *CCPQ* is formally specified in the decree: it brings together various partners from the worlds of education, enterprise and trade union organisations sitting on the National Labour Council and professional bodies. The *CCPQ* may call upon experts.

In order to draw up training profiles, six project officers seconded from education are made available to the General Council for Secondary Education. These project officers come from all three educational networks. Working together is a fairly new procedure in Belgium and shows that, in the light of large-scale problems, all the authorities are willing to work together for the higher interests of education. Each network retains its independence when translating these profiles into precise curricula.

In January 1999, a decree 'approving training profiles' was adopted by the government of the French community. This decree represents the tangible outcome of the *CCPQ*'s work since it was set up in July 1995.

5.1.1.1. The objective and working structures of the CCPQ

The *CCPQ* set up, in accordance with the decree, nine advisory committees, whose composition follows the same rules as the *CCPQ* itself. They are chaired by representatives from the world of enterprise. Each committee corresponds to one of the nine current sectors of secondary qualification education. The task of each advisory committee is to draw up profiles for the jobs in its sector. The nine sectors of qualification education are: agriculture, industry, construction, hotels and foodstuffs, clothing, applied arts, economics, personal services and applied sciences.

In order to work more efficiently, the consultative committees have set up working parties whose role is to draw up and propose particular profiles.

The working parties draw up:

(1) qualification profiles describing as completely as possible the tasks of and skills mobilised by workers in enterprises. At this initial stage, interviews with representatives from enterprises take priority;

(2) education profiles describing the set of competences to be acquired for the award (in technical and vocational education) of the qualification certificate. During this

second stage, training providers and practitioners play an equal part in exchanging proposals;

(3) structures and reference frameworks for training describing, for instance, the ways in which the various training objectives are linked, formulating training contents and learning strategies and specifying the organisation of certification and the competence credits that higher education or other training providers can use. Training providers play an increasingly active role during this third stage.

5.1.1.2. Product limits

The intellectual exercise involved in drawing up qualification profiles has limits, for instance:

— choices had to be made to group trades into 'standard jobs';

— while the profiles are intended to be exhaustive, can they accurately apprehend the precise nature of the activity?

— observations can be no more than provisional, bearing in mind changes in technology;

— the profiles describe 'experienced workers' possessing the required competences. These competences are wider than those that students are likely to possess at the end of initial vocational training;

— competences have to be handled with care and be seen more as indicators than fixed. While an objective approach can be taken to descriptions of tasks and functions that can be directly observed, a list of competences is the product of assumptions that cannot always be verified.

5.1.2. Experiments in modularisation in Flanders

These experiments have been under way since 1 September 2000 in normal full-time education and part-time secondary vocational education. Their aim is to:

— provide a flexible labour market approach,

— motivate people from the point of view of lifelong education,

— enable people to achieve intermediate success,

— provide a maximum of qualified students,

— ensure that the education supply is transparent.

Modularisation is an important tool in reducing the number of people leaving compulsory education with no qualifications. When learners obtain certificates, even if partial, they gain a recognition of their knowledge that increases their chances of finding a job or attending further training. Modularisation is therefore intended to provide a bridge between initial education and continuing training in order to encourage lifelong education. A further aim of these experiments is to adapt training to the qualifications being demanded in the labour market with a view to improved transparency.

Modules are designed on the basis of the occupational profiles drawn up by the social partners under the coordination of the *Sociaal-economische Raad van Vlaanderen* (Economic and Social Council of Flanders). In order to optimise the training opportunities provided by this system, bridges have been created between study areas and the various training schemes offered, for instance, by *VIZO* and *VDAB*.

It will not be possible to measure the impact and efficiency of modularisation until 2007, when the trial period will have been long enough for two age cohorts to have completed full cycles in normal full-time secondary education and for students to have completed at least a full cycle in the other training schemes.

Modularisation is part and parcel of new approaches to education, which include integrated work, differentiated work and team teaching.

5.1.3. Certification

5.1.3.1. Diplomas and certificates

In Belgium, certification takes the form of recognition by the Ministries of Education, following an assessment of a person's mastery of the competences described in an educational syllabus. This kind of recognition is given solely in education and has legal effects, i.e. it may give access to a regulated occupation or a job allowance, may enable equivalence with other certificates, or may be taken into account when setting new pay scales for the public service.

Looking in more detail at the various training schemes described in Chapter 3, certification seems to be somewhat disorganised. In some cases, certificates recognise competences acquired from occupational experience or by passing an exam, whereas in other cases certificates mention only that the student has actually been enrolled (see Figure 19). A whole range of uncoordinated validation practices coexist, making any comparison impossible. What is therefore needed is for all the providers to develop a coherent system for validating competences.

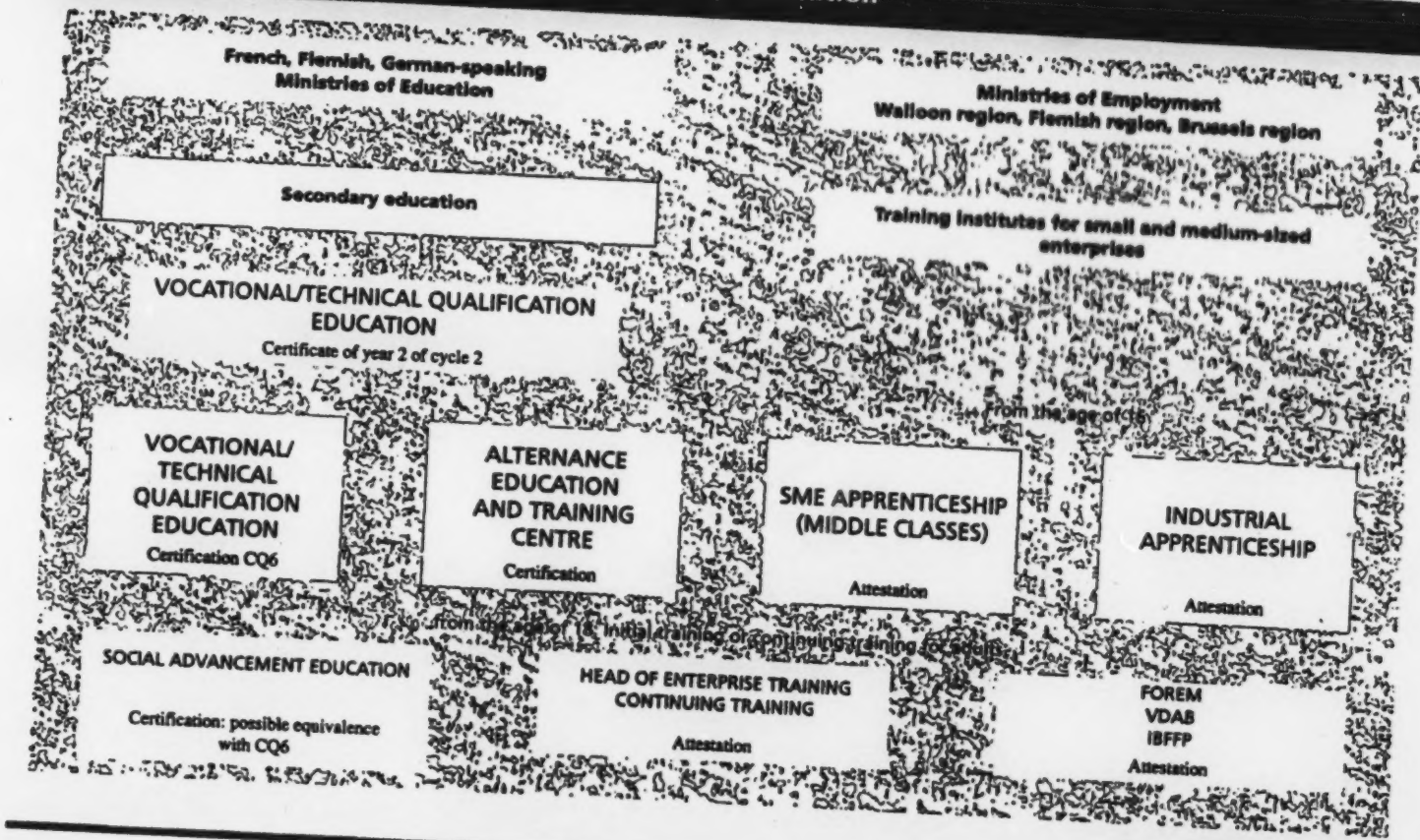
5.1.3.2. Validation of occupational experience

The French Community Boards *(jurys)* offer an additional opportunity to obtain a certificate. For students who feel that they are making no progress with their education or for workers who would like to improve their knowledge for career advancement purposes, it is possible to obtain certificates at all levels of education by sitting the examinations organised by the French Community Boards.

Students have to be fairly brave to take this route as in many cases they prepare for these examinations alone and are not helped in any way by a school environment of 'the psychological, medical and social type in the case of education' or a *FOREM/VDAB* training pathway. This is, however, an additional possibility for students whose route through education has been very disordered.

A guide to the French Community Boards was published in 1999 by *SIEP* (see Section 5.3.2). This publication contains full information on the organisation of these boards.

Figure 19 — Summary table of certification and qualification



SOURCES: AUTHORS AND CEDEFOP

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5.2. Training of trainers

5.2.1. Initial training of teachers

5.2.1.1.

This training is provided by the education sections of the high schools (higher education of the short type — see Section 3.2.4). Training lasts three years and starts after an upper secondary education certificate has been obtained. This higher education of the short type in teaching trains teachers for primary and nursery education (nursery and primary teachers) and for the first cycle of secondary education.

5.2.1.2.

The technical teacher training colleges, whose courses last three years, also train teachers for technical and practical courses and award the technical teachers' certificate (*diplôme de régent technique*).

Training is structured around three main areas:

— general education which is intended to develop logical thinking and to provide students with a knowledge of the institutional structures of Belgium and the European Union and to introduce them to cultural life and to new technologies;

— scientific or specialist training geared towards mastery of the subject that they are intending to teach;

— vocational training depending on the study section. This practical education, which starts in the first year, becomes more intensive thereafter.

The overall training course is completed by the presentation of a final report which introduces students to research approaches in the field of education.

Practical work experience is supervised by teaching staff and by work experience officers — supervisory education workers — who accommodate trainee teachers in their classes. They receive recognition and financial advantages for these accommodation and mentoring tasks.

5.2.1.3.

The training of teachers required to give technical and practical classes in secondary education takes place in two different ways, either:

(1) in the technical teacher training colleges (full-time education in a high school) (*) or

(*) In the Flemish community, however, there are no longer any technical teacher training colleges. Teacher training has been included in other higher education structures. Following the 1995 merger, these institutions became departments for the training of teachers within the newly merged high schools. Students for qualified teaching (*agrégation*) put together their own range of training: either general education, or technical and practical education or art education, or even a combination of these types of education.

(2) in social advancement education which runs technical teacher training courses for them.

In technical teacher training education, the stress is on education in technical and teaching skills. At the end of their education, students receive the diploma of 'qualified teacher for lower secondary education' or 'qualified teacher' (*agrégé(e) de l'enseignement technique moyen inférieur* or *régent(e) technique*).

Technical courses are given in social advancement higher education of the short type and lead to a certificate of educational ability. Training includes a three-year cycle for those with lower secondary education certificates, and a two-year cycle for those with higher secondary education certificates. For higher education certificate holders, one year of study is required.

University students may obtain a supplementary diploma, called an *agrégation*, in their subject which enables them to teach this subject. The courses leading to this supplementary diploma may be attended either while they are preparing for or after they have obtained their *licence*. The *agrégation* diploma itself can be obtained only after successfully obtaining a *licence*. People possessing this diploma can teach in upper secondary education and up to now in higher education of the short type. Courses for the *agrégation* last one to two years.

In the Flemish community, this option is also open to students in some higher education options outside university. To obtain the *agrégation* diploma, they must sit examinations on theoretical educational subjects and carry out a period of teaching practice in upper secondary education or higher education of the short type. For the practical examination, two lessons given during the teaching practice period are assessed and marked. In the Flemish community, however, institutions are free to set curricula and examination methods for *agrégation* training.

Since the creation of the high schools, it has been planned to create, at the latest by 2001, specific pedagogical training for teaching in the various categories of the high schools. This training will cover both theoretical and practical aspects. Plans are being studied and should lead to the introduction of the *Certificat d'aptitude pédagogique approprié à l'enseignement supérieur — CAPAES* (certificate of educational aptitude for higher education).

In the Flemish community, however, the high schools no longer require teaching certificates.

5.2.1.4.

FOREM and *VDAB* train their instructors on their own specific training courses. These are in practice given by the *Centrum voor pedagogische opleiding en studie — CPOS* (Centre for teacher training and education), which has recently been included in the *Spoor 21* service (see Section 3.3.4.2) in the case of *VDAB*, and by the *Centre de pédagogie, de recherche et de développement — PRD* (Teacher training research and development centre) and the training for trainers unit in the case of *FOREM*. These services offer training in educational and teaching methods.

5.2.2. Continuing training for teachers

Continuing training for teachers has always been organised in a very flexible way in Belgium. In the French community, the decrees of 24 December 1990 and 16 July 1993 regulate the organisation and methods of financing of continuing training for

teachers. Continuing training sessions are organised following approval by the government of the French community. They are organised and assessed by members of the inspectorate.

Each year the topics to be addressed are proposed by ministerial orders:

— in addition to the framework provided by the decrees, each network is free to organise other continuing training activities in the form of 'education days'. Particular attention has been paid in recent years to teaching of the new technologies;

— in the French community network, specific continuing training centres have been set up. These include the centre for self-instruction and continuing training at Tihange which provides teachers with a great deal of documentation and organises training sessions.

The other networks have also set up centres and manage their own continuing training schemes.

In the Flemish community, the decree of 16 April 1996 regulates the organisation and financing of continuing training for teachers. Holders of certificates from initial education may attend continuing training in the high schools. This continuing training lasts from six months to a year. Students attending these training schemes can obtain an additional teaching diploma (for instance in special education) or step up the competences that they have obtained in initial education.

Schools and networks can organise further training and retraining activities for their staff. For this purpose, they can cooperate with the high schools. In addition, the high schools can organise further or retraining courses for teachers at their own initiative.

5.3. Vocational guidance

5.3.1. At school

Guidance is provided by the *Centres psycho-médico-sociaux — PMS* (psychological, medical and social centres) in the French community. In the Flemish community, a new service, the *Centra voor leerlingbegeleiding — CLB* (student assistance centres), was introduced from 1 September 2000.

5.3.1.1. The psychological, medical and social centres

Each centre has the following personnel:

— a director: psychologist or university education specialist,
— one or more psychological and educational counsellors: psychologists or educators,
— one or more social workers,
— one or more paramedical auxiliaries: qualified nurses,
— one or more doctors paid on a sessional basis.

The centres must serve several educational institutions.

The tasks of the *PMS* centres are as follows:

(1) to take preventive and palliative initiatives to prevent or avoid factors constituting a threat to the student's life at school;
(2) to help with and cooperate on tasks of educating parents and teachers;
(3) to help with the protection of students' health;
(4) to offer students, parents and teachers information and opinions on school and/or occupational options in order to help students to make individual choices;
(5) to carry out the multidisciplinary examination required for the admission of a student into special education;
(6) to carry out psychological and social guidance tasks for young people attending part-time training. This task is extended to young people aged 18 to 25 when they are registered in a *CEFA/CDO*.

Work takes place on a multidisciplinary basis which enables more complete and more efficient guidance. The centres collect, analyse and evaluate the psychological, medical and social information that they receive on each student from their entry into nursery education up to their entry into higher education. The *PMS* centre team shares its observations with the teaching staff and the family.

In the French community, much account is taken of the opinions of the *PMS* centre at the end of each level of secondary education when orientation certificates are being awarded to enable students to continue secondary education.

5.3.1.2. The centres for student assistance

In the Flemish community, the parliament enacted a decree abolishing the *PMS* centres, keeping their personnel and introducing the *Centrum voor leerlingbegeleiding — CLB* (centre for student assistance).

The *CLB*s serve a population of at least 12 000 students. Each student within the scope of the *CLB* receives points that depend on their educational level and the options that they are attending. This weighting system gives priority to the groups in special, vocational, technical and alternance education. Further criteria include population density, young immigrants and people from areas of high population density.

Tasks and staff numbers depend on the use of the appropriation or 'capital'. The director (psychologist or doctor) has a term of office of four years which can be renewed once. Ethical principles and quality criteria (ISO 9002) are laid down for action in four fields: study and learning, school pathways, health, and psycho-social behaviour.

The *CLB*s reflect the division of the region into education catchment areas coordinated with training catchment areas.

5.3.2. Information service for education and occupations

5.3.2.1.

The *Service d'information sur les etudes et les professions — SIEP,* a non-profit-making association set up in 1972 and approved by the French community in 1974, is an independent and pluralist body. It exists only in the French-speaking part of the country and has no counterpart in the Flemish-speaking part. When it was set up, *SIEP*'s main task was to provide information. It provided information on possible school options and on occupations and trades.

5.3.2.2.

Its powers gradually increased. A telephone service has now been developed and fairs are organised every year in Liège, Namur, La Louvière and Tournai.

SIEP's main activity is at present to provide expertise and guidance. Any person concerned by an educational or vocational training problem, whatever their age, school past or vocational experience can contact *SIEP*.

Customers are largely young people who, at the end of secondary education or when they have failed once or twice in higher education, have to choose a pathway which is more appropriate for them. People looking for guidance or further guidance can arrange appointments with the information officers employed by *SIEP* which may last one and a half to two hours. At the interview, the information officers do not merely provide information. They are faced with crucial questions such as 'Why is this happening?', 'Should I go into higher education and what kind?', 'Should I go into the working world or not?'. Merely providing information is not enough at this stage.

5.3.2.3.

SIEP offers a psychological guidance service which includes:

— an interview,

— the use of computerised tests of vocational interest and personality,

— exploration of the young person's school pathway.

Information officers then draw up a kind of photo portrait which they compare, after discussion, with the image that young people have of themselves. The information officer then proposes types of education or work related to the profile that has emerged from the guidance work.

5.3.2.4.

For young people in the 18–25 age-group, *SIEP* can help them to locate supplementary training by informing them about the different training suppliers and helping them to find out about their own characteristics.

5.3.2.5.

SIEP also offers very efficient help for students from secondary education who, at the end of the first cycle, decide not to continue in full-time education or are forced, following failure at school, to move into the part-time education stream.

5.3.2.6.

As *SIEP* is a non-profit-making association receiving limited subsidies from the French community, it remains a paying service. It also finances itself through the publication of various guides to secondary and higher education. Other works are also published by *SIEP* and describe various occupations and the training programmes available in the various education networks in the French-speaking part of the country.

5.3.3. The Info–Jeunes (Info–Jeugd) centres

These non-profit-making services are comparable to the French centres for information and documentation for youth with which they work as a network at European level. Their main task is to inform teenagers and young adults about issues relating to education and guidance and in particular problems of integration and day-to-day life: young people's rights, unemployment entitlements, accommodation, contraception, drugs, leisure.

5.3.4. Guidance for adults

The various training suppliers (*FOREM*, *VDAB*, *IBFFP*) and the training centres for the middle classes (*IFPME*, *VIZO*) have all drawn up their own monitoring and guidance strategies which are continually being refined.

5.3.5. The *carrefours-formation*: information, counselling and guidance prior to training

This recent regional structure (1998) has been set up in 11 towns in Wallonia and Brussels. It is perceived as 'an open forum for information on socio-occupational integration schemes and adult training'. The *carrefours-formation* are financed by the European Social Fund and the regions (Wallonia and Brussels). Individual and group methods are used. The team of leaders is from a multi-institutional background. Figure 20 describes this approach.

Figure 20 — The carrefours-formations: characteristics

Operators	Target groups	Access	Cost	Teaching	Organisation	Recognition	Integration
AWIPH	Disabled adults	File + Interview	Free	Individual alternance	Three months to two years (*)	Certificate (AWIPH)	O-Q FS MàE
EPS	Over 15	Education Council	Registration fee	Courses Modules	Variable CEP	Attestation or recognised certificate	R&N-Q P-T&E
EFT	18 to 30 Jobseekers on Minimex (subsistence wage)	CESI + Interview	Free	Courses Individual monitoring Work	6 to 18 months (**)	Certificate (EFT)	I-S-O-Q
FOREM	Adult jobseekers Workers	Selection + Test + Interview	Free	Self-instruction courses Practical work	Maximum one year EPS (**) and (*)	Certificate (FOREM)	I-O-Q-P-T
IFPME	+15/16	Entry examination + entry file	Enrolment fee	Alternance Individual monitoring	Variable	Certificate diploma (IFPME)	Q-P-I-O
OISP	Adult jobseekers Minimexés	Interview	Free	Life plan Individual monitoring	Variable (**)	Certificate (OISP)	O-S-Q

(*) Travel costs.
(**) Allowances.

Key: CEP: paid educational leave *(congé éducation payé)*
I: Integration
O: Guidance *(orientation)*
Q: Qualification
FS: Specialist education *(formation spécialisée)*
MàE: Placement *(mise à emploi)*
R&N: Remedial education *(remise à niveau)*
P: Advanced training *(perfectionnement)*
T&E: Transition to employment *(transition à l'emploi)*
CESI: Lower secondary education certificate *(certificat d'études secondaires inférieures)*
S: Socialisation

See Annexes 1 and 4 for other acronyms and abbreviations.

SOURCE: PAUL COTTON, FRENCH COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGICAL, MEDICAL AND SOCIAL CENTRE, ATH.

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Chapter 6
Trends and perspectives

6.1. Education and training systems developing in different ways

6.1.1.

Attentive readers will be aware that vocational training systems in Belgium are very complex. This is not just the result of the wide-ranging supply (a whole range of alternance training methods as well as training providers in adult education). The reform of the State and the division and even fragmentation (in Brussels) of powers have made it increasingly impossible to speak of a Belgian education and training system. Although this system has retained its national nature in some respects, education and training policy is starting to diverge and develop in different ways in the communities where concepts, problems, priorities and dynamics are being, or are starting to be, perceived differently.

This is being reflected by different legislative provisions and different practical initiatives.

6.1.2.

As a result of this complexity and diversity, information is also very dispersed. This raises problems when collecting statistical data. Some data are centralised at national level, others at community level. Not all the information from the communities is compatible. Some information is lacking. Even within the communities, it is often difficult to obtain a coherent overview of the different systems of education and training. What is needed is an 'observatory' responsible for observing student flows and budgets in vocational training, collecting data in a standardised way and processing these data in ways that are in keeping with research needs and enable the drawing up of the outlines of a more coherent policy at both federal and community level. One of the particular tasks of this observatory would be to draw up survey plans for labour market supply and demand.

The pace of development of the vocational training system became much faster during the 1990s, in a world marked by rapid technological and ongoing social changes. It would be interesting and particularly useful to study how various dynamic aspects specific to the communities are evolving (for instance: entries into and departures from training, mobility, pay setting, regulation of working time, the problems raised by qualification, selection and recruitment, the problem of continuing training and further training).

These survey plans would need to be drawn up rigorously and based as far as possible on concerted action by the communities, taking the parameters used by international organisations and in particular the European Union as a starting point in order to ensure that data are compatible with those from other Member States.

6.2. The role of the public authorities and enterprises

6.2.1.

The public authorities have traditionally played a leading role in vocational education and training in Belgium. This is certainly true of initial education. With its vast network of schools offering technical and vocational secondary education, the education system still accounts for almost all young people, whether in full-time or part-time education.

6.2.2.

Like other European countries, Belgium is, however, facing the problem of adapting education to current realities. Schools often find it very difficult to adapt students' qualification levels to changes in (and the modernisation of) work whether these changes are technological, structural or market-driven. Issues in this field are twofold: forging closer links between the initial education system and the production system and also, within the education system, breathing new life into technical and vocational education which tends not to have the same social standing as general education.

6.2.3.

An attempt therefore has to be made to meet, in the area of young people's qualification, a twofold objective: providing them with education that is general enough to enable them to keep up with changing technologies and providing them with training that is specific enough for them to be integrated into the enterprise.

This seems even more paramount in the light of the picture of education structures in Belgium drawn up by the OECD. At the request of the Education Ministries of the Flemish, French and German-speaking communities, the OECD conducted a detailed examination of the Belgian education system. The results of this study were published in 1991.

The OECD experts were struck by the cost of education in Belgium. Belgians pay a high price for free education and a free choice of schools. Compared with this substantial expenditure, the yield seems inadequate. At the end of primary education, one out of ten students in the Flemish community and three out of ten in the other communities are lagging behind. At the end of secondary education, the statistics show that 40 % of students in Flanders and 60 % in the other regions are lagging behind.

Measures to rationalise education have been taken in Belgium as a result of these observations. The best example is the creation of the high schools (see Section 3.2.4). One of the most important of the OECD's recommendations was to draw up a new profile for technical and vocational education. The *CCPQ* and its counterpart in the Flemish community were set up in an attempt to put this recommendation into practice (see Section 5.1.1).

6.2.4.

The work that Belgium's three communities are undertaking in initial education and the diversification and development of systems, where concerted action is lacking as a

result of the complex division of powers, have to go together with work to improve the continuing vocational training system.

Population ageing and a relatively low birth rate (developments which are to be found in almost all the Member States of the European Union), the rapid development of technologies and changes in the content of jobs and qualifications mean that workers must have permanent access to lifelong education throughout their working lives.

6.2.5.

There has been a growing awareness in recent years of the nature and extent of the challenges raised by training as a process accompanying change. The European Commission's White Paper highlights the new kinds of relations between the production of competences and current problems in the areas of employment, integration and exclusion.

The ways in which labour markets operate at present tend to bolster the selection that has already taken place in initial education. The growing number of certificate holders, in a context of dwindling employment, means that employers are pitching their requirements higher. The availability of increasingly high qualification levels in the labour market may well mean, on the one hand, that less qualified or unqualified workers are discarded, and on the other hand, that substitution effects are generated for some groups of workers.

Paradoxically, the most precarious groups (those whose mobility is imposed) have much less access to continuing training: this is true of those in precarious jobs or with temporary agency contracts as well as all those people whose mobility has been imposed by changes in employment structures.

Belgium has devised a particular strategy to cope with this situation. Since 1989 (with the exception of 1997–98), trade unions and employers' organisations have concluded multisectoral agreements containing provisions under which enterprises have to channel part of their wage bill into the training of these 'risk groups'.

Under the 1999/2000 agreement, the percentage is set at 0.10 %. However, the partners also entered into a commitment that could substantially modify the vocational training landscape. They undertook to make supplementary efforts to place Belgium on a path leading, after six years, to the average level of its three neighbours. The contribution from enterprises will be increased from 1.2 % to 1.4 %.

6.2.6.

Unfortunately, it is not enough for the legislator to create frameworks and possibilities. All the participants concerned, including enterprises, must place all kinds of initial and continuing training schemes on a practical footing. Practical initiatives have been inadequate up to now. Initial training using alternance methods is still of secondary importance from a qualitative point of view.

Enterprises tend to play a more active role in continuing training schemes.

Some private operators have agreed to work with *FOREM*, *VDAB* and *IBFFP* in order to promote employment and training for the long-term unemployed and for unemployed people with few skills.

The *Plan d'accompagnement des chômeurs — PAC* (unemployment assistance plan), introduced at the beginning of 1993, stated that these regional bodies responsible for employment should contact all unemployed people aged 46 or more and entering their 10th month of unemployment, in order to offer them a strategy through which they could be reintegrated into the labour market. Of the 267 000 people contacted between January 1993 and July 1995, only 5 % finally found a job, 73 000 attended supplementary vocational training schemes and 55 000 were directed towards public temporary work agencies.

The German-speaking community has undertaken substantially to extend the range of training options offered to jobseekers and also to increase their chances of finding a job through cooperation with German partners outside Belgium's frontiers but speaking the same language.

6.3. The impact of Europe

6.3.1.

The idea that initial education should be updated and supplemented throughout life is widely accepted in the European Union. The Union has recently introduced several initiatives affirming the role that continuing training and competences have to play in the context of the socioeconomic changes of the 1990s.

This desire to develop lifelong education and training has been shaped by a number of major trends characteristic of European societies, and in particular:

— the impact of demographic trends and the marked ageing of the working population on most European economies;

— a new desire to step up people's individual commitment so that new funding methods and tax and accounting incentives can be mobilised (loan schemes, training savings accounts, for instance);

— the massive growth in the use of the new information and communication technologies to which a number of Member States (for instance the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden) are giving priority as a way of developing learning opportunities and ensuring that training becomes both more flexible and more accessible;

— the prospect of a knowledge society in which the methods by which competences are acquired can be diversified and extended, in particular through partnerships and networks between knowledge production sites and knowledge distribution sites.

6.3.2.

There is therefore little doubt that, in addition to financial incentives from European funds, in particular the ESF, targeted on specific groups of unemployed people living

in conversion areas (*), European policy in general has an impact on vocational training.

The renewal of the Leonardo da Vinci programme from 1 January 2000 for a period of seven years should make it possible to continue to launch schemes in both initial and continuing vocational training. This programme also makes provision for complementary links with other European policies and programmes, closer links with the 'guidelines' for employment and participation by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and SMEs as partners and project leaders in areas including the formulation of priorities.

6.3.3.

An international relations service was therefore set up some years ago in *VDAB* and *FOREM* when a wide range of European action programmes were being developed. The objective of *VDAB* and *FOREM* here was to ensure maximum information circulation, to attract the vocational training knowledge and expertise available in other Member States towards their own institutions and also to obtain the financial resources that the European Union is making available in this area.

Both institutions also wish to see themselves as competent and full partners in the field of continuing vocational training at a European level. By developing this kind of partnership, they are creating, either as project leaders or simple partners, synergies between enterprises, schools and other training institutions in Belgium and other Member States of the European Union.

6.4. Conclusion

6.4.1.

Overall, Belgium is constantly looking to improve its training supply and socio-occupational integration in order to enable young people and adults to spend as little time in unemployment as possible. A whole range of synergies between training providers and trade union and employers' representatives are being generated at both regional and community level and under European programmes.

6.4.2.

While very real efforts are being made to provide training, as a general rule, quality control has yet to be systematically included in the objectives and practice of this training.

There are two main trends in Europe. The first comes from providers themselves, or from their target groups, who are concerned that the market lacks transparency and would like training to comply with quality criteria. Schemes such as ISO 9000 are involved here. The second trend is for government bodies to define and publish quality criteria. Practices of this kind continue to be little used in Belgium.

(*) Areas in which there has been major economic development in the past but which, following closures of enterprises, have lost their economic function and are deemed by the public authorities to be areas whose economic role needs to be stimulated.

At the very least, the public authorities should be able to answer the following questions:

- what role can they play in drawing up training curricula and in defining the corresponding qualifications?
- what criteria should be used to evaluate the ability of operators to provide training?
- how can programmes which should receive subsidies from the public authorities be identified?
- what role should quality evaluation play in financing mechanisms?
- how can competences be assessed and validated in a system under which everyone has the same access to validation?

Problems raised by the operation of the continuing vocational training system cannot be dissociated from an assessment of product quality. Since too little is currently known about product quality, it is therefore impossible to evaluate whether the results achieved are in keeping with the objectives pursued and the investment. This concern for quality is part and parcel of approaches that are intended to regulate an increasingly open market and the increasing mobility of European workers.

Annex 1
List of acronyms and abbreviations

AID	*Actions intégrées de développement* Integrated development measures
AR	*Arrêté royal* *Koninklijk Besluit (KB)* Royal Decree
ARGO	*Autonome Raad voor het Gemeenschapsonderwijs* *Conseil autonome pour l'enseignement communautaire flamand* Autonomous Council for Flemish Community Education
ASBL	*Association sans but lucratif* *Vereniging Zonder Winstoogmerk (VZW)* Non-profit-making association
AWIPH	*Agence wallonne pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées* *Vlaams Fonds voor Sociale Integratie van Personen met een Handicap (VFSIPH)* Walloon/Flemish Agency for the Integration of Disabled People
BEF	Belgian franc
BGDA	*Brusselse Gewestelijke Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling* Brussels Regional Office for Employment
BIS	*Begeleid Individueel Studeren* Distance learning with the help of a teacher
CA/COISP	*Centre d'accueil, d'orientation et d'initiation socio-professionnelle* Reception, guidance and socio-occupational induction centre
CAF	*Centre d'auto-formation et de formation continue* Self-instruction and continuing training centre
CAI	*Contrat d'apprentissage industriel* Industrial apprenticeship contract
CAPAES	*Certificat d'aptitude pédagogique approprié à l'enseignement supérieur* Certificate of educational ability for higher education
CCPQ	*Commission communautaire des professions et des qualifications* Community Commission on Occupations and Qualifications
CEFA	*Centre d'éducation et de formation en alternance* *Centrum voor Deeltijds Onderwijs (CDO)* Alternance education and training centre
CEISP	*Centre d'éducation et d'insertion socio-professionnelle* Education and socio-occupational induction centre
CEP	*Congé éducation payé* *Betaald Educatief Verlof (BEV)* Paid educational leave
CESS	*Certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur* Higher secondary education certificate
CIDJ	*Centre d'information et de documentation de la jeunesse* Youth information and documentation centre
COCOF	*Commission communautaire française* French Community Commission
CPAS	*Centre public d'aide sociale* *Openbaar Centrum voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn (OCMW)* Public social welfare centre

CQ	*Certificat de qualification* Qualification certificate
CSEF	*Comité subrégional de l'emploi et de la formation* *Subregionaal Tewerkstellingscomité (STC)* Subregional Committee on Employment and Training
DEA	*Diplôme d'études approfondies* Higher education diploma
DES	*Diplôme d'études spécialisées* Specialist education diploma
DESS	*Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées* Specialist higher education diploma (higher non-university education)
(EAP:	*Entreprise d'apprentissage professionnel* Vocational apprenticeship enterprise)
now,	
EFT	*Entreprise de formation par le travail* Work training enterprise
EHR	*Enseignement à horaire réduit* Part-time education
EPS	*Enseignement de promotion sociale* *Onderwijs sociale promotie (OSP)* Social advancement education
ESF	European Social Fund
FEB	*Fédération des entreprises de Belgique* *Verbond van Belgische Ondernemingen (VBO)* Federation of Enterprises in Belgium
FOREM	*Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi* Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Employment
IAWM	Institut für Aus-und-Weiterbildung im Mittelstand Institute for Further and Continuing Training for the Middle Classes (German-speaking community)
IBFFP	*Institut bruxellois francophone pour la formation professionnelle (Bruxelles-Formation)* French-speaking Brussels Institute for Vocational Training (Brussels-Training)
IFPME	*Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes enterprises* Continuing Training Institute for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
IMF	International Monetary Fund
InduTec	*Association des instituts superieurs industriels de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale* *Vereniging van de Industriële Hogescholen van het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest* Association of Higher Industrial Institutes of the Brussels Region
INS	*Institut national de statistiques* *Nationaal Instituut voor Statistiek (NIS)* National Statistical Institute

MET	*Ministère fédéral de l'emploi et du travail* *Federaal Ministerie van Tewerkstelling en Arbeid* Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OISP	*Organisme d'insertion socio-professionnelle (Région de Bruxelles-Capitale)* Socio-occupational Integration Agency (Brussels region)
ONEM	*Office national de l'emploi* *Rijksdienst voor Arbeidsvoorziening (RVA)* National Employment Office
ONSS	*Office National de Sécurité Sociale* *Rijkssociale Zekerheid (RSZ)* National Social Security Office
ORBEM	*Office régional bruxellois de l'emploi* Brussels Regional Employment Office
PAC	*Plan d'accompagnement des chômeurs* Unemployment assistance plan
PMS	*(Centres) psycho-médico-sociaux* *Centra voor Leerlingbegeleiding (CLB)* Psychological, medical and social centres
SERV	*Sociaal Economische Raad Vlaanderen* *(Comité économique et social de Flandre)* Economic and Social Committee of Flanders
SIEP	*Service d'information sur les études et les professions (Communauté française)* Information service on education and occupations (French community)
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SPR	*Service permanent de recrutement* Permanent recruitment service [replaced since 1.1.2000 by SELOR: *Bureau de sélection de l'administration fédérale/Vast Wervingssecretariaat (VWS)* Selection bureau of the federal administration]
SRDU	*Secretariat régional au développement urbain* Regional secretariat for urban development
VET	Vocational education and training
VDAB	*Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding* Flemish Office for Placement and Vocational Training
VIZO	*Vlaams Instituut voor het Zelfstandig Ondernemen* Flemish Institute for Small Businesses
VLOR	*Vlaamse Onderwijs Raad* *(Conseil de l'enseignement flamand)* Flemish Education Council

Annex 2
Addresses of main organisations

Ministère de la Communauté française
Secrétariat Général
Direction des relations internationales
Boulevard Léopold II, 44
B-1080 Bruxelles
Tel. (32) 02 413 23 11
Fax (32) 02 413 29 82
Internet: http://www.cfwb.be

Ministère de la Communauté française
Administration générale de l'enseignement et de la recherche scientifique
Direction générale de l'enseignement obligatoire
Rue Royale, 204
B-1040 Bruxelles
Tel. (32) 02 213 59 11
Fax (32) 02 213 59 90
Internet: http://www.agers.cfwb.be

Ministère de la Communauté française
Administration générale de l'enseignement et de la recherche scientifique
Direction générale de l'enseignement non-obligatoire et de la recherche scientifique
Rue Royale, 204
B-1000 Bruxelles
Tel. (32) 02 210 55 11
Fax (32) 02 210 55 17
Internet: http://www.agers.cfwb.be

Ministère de la Communauté française
Administration générale de la culture et de l'informatique
Service général de l'informatique et des statistiques
Cité Administrative de l'Etat
Boulevard Pacheco, 19, boîte 0
B-1010 Bruxelles
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Royal Military Academy: http://www.rma.ac.be

Union des classes moyennes (UCM): http://www.ucm.be

Annex 4
Glossary

Action plan for employment
(*Plan d'action pour l'emploi*)
Belgian action plan of 1998 drawn up under European employment guidelines.

Community grant
(*Dotation*)
Revenue which is shared between the three communities in Belgium and distributed proportionately. The 1989 finance law (governing the funding of the communities and regions) therefore states that part of the revenue from the value added tax charged on all Belgian goods is to be allocated to the communities in accordance with a particular distribution formula.

Competence
(*Compétence*)
Ability to use an organised set of knowledge, expertise and attitudes in order to accomplish a number of tasks.

Competence base
(*Socle de compétences*)
Reference framework presenting, in a structured manner, the basic competences to be mastered at the end of a stage of education.

Conversion area
(*Zone de reconversion*)
An area where economic development has been substantial in the past but which, following enterprise closures, has lost its economic function and is deemed by the public authorities to be an area whose economic role needs to be promoted.

Credit hours
(*Crédit d'heures/Kredieturen*)
Hours used to pursue a course of education or training without loss of earnings and without forfeiting entitlement to social security, etc.

Full-time education
(*Enseignement de plein exercice*)
Education given during the day for five days of the week

Gross domestic product — GDP
(*Produit intérieur brut — PIB*)
Total sum of the added value of goods and services produced by public and private enterprises of a country during a financial year.

Joint apprenticeship committee
(*Comité paritaire d'apprentissage/Paritair leercomité*)
Committee responsible for organising apprenticeship for salaried occupations within a specific sector. The apprenticeship committee is made up of members representing employers and workers from this sector, as well as representatives of the community governments responsible for education and training.

Joint committee
(*Commission paritaire/Paritair Comité*)
A body for concerted social action set up for a sector of activity and containing an equal number of representatives of workers' and employers' organisations. The task of the joint committee is to help draw up collective labour agreements and to prevent and conciliate all disputes between workers and employers.

Minimexé
Person receiving a minimum wage from the *CPAS* (*Centre public d'aide sociale* — public social welfare centre) which is a municipal body.

Moody's International quotation agency
Index drawn up by the private American 'rating' company which evaluates the solvency of enterprises chiefly on the basis of their share quotation on the stock exchange and their borrowing levels.

Multisectoral agreement
(Accord interprofessionnel /Interprofessionnel Akkoord)
Agreement concluded for two years, outside the institutional framework, under which the social partners agree on measures of a social nature at federal level which are implemented via collective labour agreements.

Reception, guidance and socio-occupational induction centre
(Centre d'accueil, d'orientation et d'initiation socio-professionnelle/Onthaalcentra en centra voor beroepsoriëntatie en socio-professionele initiatie)
Centres set up as a result of the economic crisis in order to assist the integration (or reintegration) into working life of young unemployed people, especially those who have been out of work for a long time, by providing them with reception periods during which they are provided with information and undergo tests to identify their potential, and periods of guidance and socio-occupational induction during which they learn about the mechanisms of the economy and socio-occupational life, as well as the requirements of the working world, and the pathways leading to specific types of training. At the end of this process, trainees draw up a training plan.

Régent
Educational qualification of teachers in the first and second cycles of secondary education.

Social advancement education
(Enseignement de promotion sociale/Onderwijs voor social promotie)
Evening and weekend courses for adults organised under the education system. Courses are vocationally oriented, or aimed at improving languages or developing general education.

Supervisory officer
(Délégué à la tutelle)
Independent workers who, in the system used for training for the middle classes, act as intermediaries between students, parents or guardians and heads of enterprise, when drawing up an apprenticeship contract.

Vocational training for the middle classes
(Formation professionnelle pour les classes moyennes)
On-the-job vocational training given outside the school system for the sector of self-employed occupations (practical training, training in trade skills, commercial training and training for service occupations).

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

Vocational education and training in Belgium

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